Siva Temples of South India





SIVA TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

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PREFACE

For centuries, the magnificent and sacred temples of South India have been attracting Hindu pilgrims from all parts of India and abroad.

This book seeks to present the Siva temples that could be visited in a single round trip. On the same route/s there are Vaishnava temples, equally sacred and worshipped, which could also be visited.

The ideal season for making a pilgrimage of South India would be the months December to March.

An effort has been made here to acquaint the intending pilgrims with the location, route and details of the temples. A set of Route Charts and Maps attached to this book at the end will be of help for visiting the temples and completing the pilgrimage in minimum time.

While compiling this book, sufficient care has been taken to give correct and current information as far as practicable.

This task has been undertaken in the spirit of service to the visiting pilgrims and the effort will be considered fruitful if the pilgrims have found this book of help to complete their yatra comfortably.

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LORD SIVA

Lord Siva, according to the Saivite cult, is the Supreme God and the Creator, Protector and Destroyer. He is Parameswara who has manifested Himself as Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. Hence He is popularly known as Maha Deva. His consort is Devi Parvati, otherwise called Sakti. Lord Siva is very generous and a boon-giver to anyone, even a sinner if only he repents and worships Him. He has readily responded many a time to the call of His devotees, be they the Devas, the Asuras, the Mankind or otherwise. He applies Vibhuti all over His body. He is very much satisfied with a tiger-skin for a garment and to sit on for meditation. While all the Devas chose Indraloka, Satyaloka, etc. and took Amrit for immortality, Lord Siva chose the Mayana (burning ghat) as His dwelling place. He swallowed the poison 'alahala' and saved the universe from chaos. Thereby His neck became utter black and He was called Neelakantheswar. Snakes are His ornaments round His neck and hands. He holds the furious Ganga on His matted hair. He has given the Crescent Moon a shelter on His head. In His four hands He holds a damaru, a bowl, a trident and an antelope. He has a third eye, vertically formed in the middle of his forehead. It is described as the frontal eye, the eye of fire and the eye of higher perception. It is mainly directed inward but when directed outward it burns all that appears before it. Lord Siva is universally worshipped in the temples in the Linga form. He is also worshipped as Nataraja. He destroys the world through fire and recreates it with drum beats. Siva is the Great God of South India and is worshipped everywhere. Anybody can please Him with water and bilva leaves. He rides a bull (Vrishabha), called Nandi, which is His mount. At all Siva temples Nandi is to be found in front of Lord Siva and specially worshipped.

DEVI PARVATI

Devi Parvati is the consort of Lord Siva. She is the daughter of Himavan, the King of the Himalayas. As Dakshyayani in Her previous incarnation, She self-immolated just to expunge the name that She was the daughter of Dakshaprajapati, due to the disrespect shown by him to her husband Lord Siva during the Daksha Yagna, and took re-birth as Parvati. She is also Bhuvaneswari (Mother Universe). She is Sakti (Energy) and shares a part of Siva's body, that is why Lord Siva is also called Ardhanariswara. She is very pleasing and can be easily pleased, but when she takes the form of Durga or Kali she is very furious and seen destroying the wicked and at the same time protecting the virtuous.

GANESA (VINAYAKA)

Lord Ganesa is considered to be a Mantra Roopa. Once, in Kailas, Lord Siva envisioned a Mantra called Samashti Pranava, and Devi Parvati, Vyashti Pranava. Out of these two mantras appeared Lord Ganesa. Custom is that Lord Ganesa is worshipped first before commencement of any work or activity. He is the remover of obstacles and granter of success and prosperity. Riddhi and Siddhi are His two consorts. The mooshika (rat) is His vehicle.

SUBRAMANYA

Lord Subramanya, popularly known as Muruga in South India and Kartikeya in North India, is the destroyer of all evils. He was created by Lord Siva through His third eye to kill the evil demon, Surapadman, who was mighty and

powerful and terrorised the Devas. Lord Subramanya has six faces and twelve hands. His two consorts are Valli and Deivayanai. The peacock is His Vahan.

AYYAPPA (SASTHA)

Lord Ayyappa was born out of the union of Lord Siva and Vishnu (Mohini). Thus He is also called Hariharaputra - son of Vishnu (Hari) and Siva (Hara), and regarded as the third son of Lord Siva. Lord Ayyappa is popularly worshipped in Kerala whose abode at Sabarimala is a centre of pilgrimage.

Apart from the above, Bhairava, Kali and Veerabhadra are also the creations of Lord Siva.

TEMPLES OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

All temples are holy to the believer, but there are some that are of special significance. Their origin goes deep into the hoary past; their occult influence is active even in the material present; and their blessing assures a happy future. The following are such temples of special significance :–

1. JYOTIR LINGAS

Lord Siva is conceived of in His Jyoti Swaroop and in this form, as Jyotir Linga, He is presiding at twelve places which are considered as most important of the Siva temples. They are :-

	Place	Name of the Lord	Sl. No. of this book
1.	Somnath (Gujarat)	Somnatheswara	...
2.	Srisailam (A.P)	Mallikarjunaswamy	46
3.	Ujjain (M.P)	Mahakaleswara	...
4.	Omkareswara (M.P)	Omkareswara	...
5.	Kedarnath (U.P)	Kedareswara	...
6.	Bhimasankar (Maharashtra)	Bhimasankara	...
7.	Varanasi (U.P.)	Visveswara	...
8.	Tryambakeswar(Maharashtra)	Tryambakeswara	...
9.	Vaidyanath (Bihar)	Vaidyanath	...
10.	Nageswar (Gujarat)	Nageswara	..
11.	Rameswaram(Tamilnadu)	Ramanathaswamy	320
12.	Ghirishnesh (Maharashtra)	Ghirishneshwara	...

2. PANCHA BHOOTA KSHETRAS

The five great Elements of nature are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space. Lord Siva represents one each of these five elements at the following places which are collectively called Pancha Bhoota Kshetras.

	Place	Element	Name of the Lord	Sl. No. of this book
1.	Srikalahasti	Vayu(Air)	Srikalahastiswara	58
2.	Kancheepuram	Prithvi(Earth)	Ekambareswarar	75 (6)
3.	Tiruvannamalai	Agni(Fire)	Arunachaleswarar	93
4.	Chidambaram	Akasha(Space)	Nataraja	116
5.	Tiruvanaikkaval	Appu(Water)	Jambukeswarar	295

3. ASHTA VEERATTANA KSHETRAS

Certain places are identified where Lord Siva assumed Rajoguna and performed heroic deeds for destroying evil forces. Eight such places are specifically mentioned and collectively called Ashta Veerattana Kshetras. They are :

	Place	Heroicdeeds	Sl. No. of this Book
1.	Tirukkoyilur	Andhakasura Samhara	94 (2)
2.	Tiruvadigai	Tripura Dahan	101
3.	Tirukkadavur	Yama was kicked	129 (1)
4.	Parasalur	Daksha's head removed	131
5.	Kurukkai	Kama Dahan	144
6.	Valuvur	Gajasura Samhara	149
7.	Virkudi	Jalandarasura Samhara	200
8.	Kandiyur	Brahma's head plucked	273

4. SAPTA VIDANGA KSHETRAS

Sapta Vidanga Kshetras are the seven places where the seven Spatikalingas brought by Muchukunda Chakravarti from Devaloka are worshipped. These lingamurtis are called 'Vidanga' because they were created by Maya. ('Vi' means 'without' and 'danga' means 'chisel', i.e. without the aid of chisel). Further, each of these seven places is also identified with a well known dance form of Lord Siva as Tyagaraja. They are :-

	Place	Name of the Lord	Dance	Sl. No. of this book
1.	Tiruvarur	Veedhi Vidangar	Ajapa Natanam	197
2.	Tirunallaru	Nagara Vidangar	Unmatha Natanam	217
3.	Nagapattinam	Sundara Vidangar	Para-vara-taranga Natanam	221
4.	Tirukkuvalai	Avani Vidangar	Biringa Natanam	227
5.	Tiruvaimur	Nila Vidangar	Kamala Natanam	229
6.	Tirukkaraivasal	Adi Vidangar	Kukkuta Natanam	236
7.	Vedaranyam	Bhuvani Vidangar	Hamsapada Natanam	243

5. PANCHA SABHAS

The five places where Lord Nataraja performed His Tandavam are collectively known as Pancha Sabhas meaning Five Assembly Halls of Lord Nataraja. They are :

	Place	Name of the Sabha	Dance	Sl. No. of this book
1.	Chidambaram	Kanaka Sabha	Ananda Tandavam	116
2.	Tiruvalangadu	Ratna Sabha	Oordhva Tandavam	65
3.	Madurai	Rajata Sabha	Sandhya Tandavam	325
4.	Tirunelveli	Tamira Sabha	Muni Tandavam	332
5.	Kutralam	Chitra Sabha	Tripura Tandavam	331

6. PANCHA-ARAMA-KSHETRAS

Pancha-Arama-Kshetras are those five places where the pieces of a Swayambhu Linga are installed. This Swayambhu Linga, which was being carried by Tarakasura in his throat, was broken into five pieces by Kumaraswamy(Subramanya) during the course of a war with him and these pieces fell at the following places.

	Place	Name of the Lord	Sl. No. of this Book
1.	Draksharama	Draksharama Swamy	26
2.	Samalkot	Bhimarama Swamy	25
3.	Gunipidi (Bhimavaram)	Somarama Swamy	36
4.	Palakollu	Kshirarama Swamy	35
5.	Amaravati	Amararama Swamy	42

7. ARUPADAI VEEDU

There are many temples in the south for Lord Subramanya. But six of them are identified as directly associated with Him. These six places are collectively known as Arupadai Veedu (The six celestial abodes of Lord Subramanya) and considered especially sacred. They are :-

	Place	Sl. No. of this Book
1.	Tiruttani	70
2.	Swamimalai	261
3.	Palani	312
4.	Pazhamudircholai	324
5.	Tirupparankunram	327
6.	Tiruchendur	333

8. NAVAGRAHA KSHETRAS

Worship of the Navagraha Murtis is done in various ways not only to appease them for mitigation of their malefic influence but also to seek their blessings for acquiring peace, wealth, prosperity and longevity of life in the world. Perhaps, to satisfy this need, a shrine is wholly set apart for the planetary deities in all Siva temples. They are installed on a single platform with the Sun God as the presiding deity in the centre. There are, however, a few temples where one or the other of the Navagraha deities individually finds a place exclusively dedicated for them as listed below :-

	Place	Planet	Sl. No. of this Book
1.	Suryanarkoil	Ravi (Sun)	160
2.	Tiruvarur	Soma (Moon)	197
3.	Vaithiswarankoil	Mangal (Mars)	138
4.	Tiruvenkadu	Budh (Mercury)	123
5.	Alangudi	Guru (Jupiter)	192
6.	Kanjanoor	Sukra (Venus)	161
7.	Tirunallaru	Shani (Saturn)	217
8.	Srikalahasti	Rahu-Ketu	58
9.	Tirunageswaram	Rahu	169

9. PADAL PETRA STHALANGAL

Padal Petra Sthalangal are those Siva temples whos glory has been sung in hymns by the Nayanmars. For thi purpose, four nayanmars out of the 63 nayanmars are identified. They are Appar, Tirugnanasambandar, Sundarar and Manickavachakar, collectively called 'Nalvar' in Tamil. This book covers almost all the temples praised by them.

FESTIVALS AND PUJAS

Sivaratri, during February/March, is a very important festival in all the Siva Temples. Arudra Darshan for Nataraja during December/January is also very famous in all Siva Temples. Skanda Shashthi in November and Thai Poosam in January are celebrated in all Subramanya Temples. During the Navaratri days, in the months of March/April and September/October, festivals are held in all the temples of Goddess Parvati and Durga.

In Siva temples pujas are offered both to the Moolavigraham and the Utsavamurti with abhishekam, archana and aradhana. Particularly, pujas are performed four times a day, i.e. at sunrise, mid-day, sunset, and night. During the festival days, the Utsavamurti of the Lord is carried on the shoulders of men or taken on a chariot on pre-determined routes inside the temple or in the township to facilitate darshan of the Lord by all.

SPECIAL NOTE

1. To cover the journey in minimum time, temples are described serially and Route Charts and Maps are drawn in the same order.

2. It is very important to plan at least three days' programme in advance so that the timings for the journey/darshan in the morning or evening are decided beforehand.

3. The next day's programme details should be studied with a suitable local person. It may help in case of new developments such as better approach roads, etc.

4. By engaging a local person as guide in places like Madras, Kancheepuram, Sirkali, Kumbakonam, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Tiruchirapalli, Madurai, etc., where there are many temples in the surrounding areas, time can be saved in locating the temples.

5. Sufficient pujan samagri like camphor, coconut, bananas, betel-leaves and nuts, agarbathi, etc. should be kept ready to save time in purchasing the same.

6. Tea and snacks (fruits, biscuits, condensed milk, etc.,) should be kept during the pilgrimage as sometimes one may get delayed for want of these items.

7. Entry into halting stations should be, as far as possible, in day time so as to be able to locate and secure accommodation without delay.

8. In some temples, from Tiruchendur onwards upto Karnataka, male members are asked to take their upper garments off. So, one should keep a dhoti and shawl (angavastram) available with him.

9. Normally, temples remain closed from 12-00 hours to 17-00 hours but in Kerala the closure is from 11-00 hours to 17-00 hours.

10. Sastras enjoin the following observances while visiting a temple :-

    a) To rest one's head on the balipeetha and then have the darshan of the Lord. Resting one's head on the balipeetha is a symbolism of sacrificing 'Ahamkara' (egoism).

    b) Not to tread between the deity and the balipeetha and between the Sivalinga and the Nandi.

    c) Not to cross or walk on the shadow of the Vimana of the deity.

11. Sastras permit sea-bath only on Full Moon and New Moon days. But it is permitted any day at kshetras like Puri, Vedaranyam, Rameswaram, Kanyakumari, Gokarna, etc.

12. Some of the dharamshalas for halting purposes are suggested below :

    i) **VIJAYAWADA**
    Malani Dharamshala,

    ii) **MADRAS**
    a) Seetha Bhawan,
    5/6, Edapalayam Street,
    b) Agarwal Bhawan,
    28, Audiappa Naicken Street,

    iii) **KANCHEEPURAM**
    Uttaradhi Sri Vaishnava Math,
    Behind Varadarajaswamy Temple,

iv) **KUMBAKONAM**
Bangur Dharamshala,
4, Maha Magham Street,

v) **SRIRANGAM**
Bangur Dharamshala,
(in front of Sri Ranganatha Temple),

vi) **MADURAI**
Bangur Dharamshala,
6, West Veli Street,
(Opp. Railway Station),

vii) **RAMESWARAM**
Bangur Dharamshala,
26/28, South Car Street,
(in front of Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple),

NOTE :-

At many places there are Government Dak Bungalows and Guest Houses where one can enquire and secure accommodation.

1. CALCUTTA

There are three important temples.

1. KALI TEMPLE : KALIGHAT

This ancient temple is situated in the southern part of the City. It is about 4 Km south of the Victoria Memorial. The presiding deity is Ma Kali. This place has its importance as one of the 51 Saktipeethas. Legend says that Dakshyayani (Sati) immolated herself due to the dishonour shown by her father, Daksha, to her husband, Siva, on the occasion of the Dakshayagna.Siva, in rage started his Tandava, carrying the corpse of Sati on his shoulder and roamed the universe. In order to remove the sorrow caused to Siva and, to pacify him, Mahavishnu cut the corpse of Sati into pieces with his sudarshana chakra. The dissected limbs and other parts of the body, said to be numbering about 51 pieces, fell at different places, and those places became the famous Saktipeethas. It is believed that four toes of the right foot of Sati fell at this place.

2. SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE: LAKE GARDENS

This temple, situated next to Sri Ram Mandir in South Calcutta, is about 4 Km from Kalighat. The presiding deity is Lord Subramanya, popularly known as Lord Muruga.

3. KALI TEMPLE: DAKSHINESWAR

This temple is situated about 10 Km from Howrah Station, on the eastern bank of the River Hooghly, near the Bally Bridge. It is considered to be a very sacred place because here Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsadev attained Moksha (Mukti) after his life long meditation and worship of the presiding deity Ma Kali. In the same place Swami Vivekananda got Diksha (sacred initiation) from his Guru Sri Ramakrishna. It is said that Rani Rasmani, a wealthy woman and an ardent devotee of Ma Kali, wanted to visit Banaras

for pilgrimage, but Goddess Kali appeared in her dream and directed her to construct a temple and worship Her here instead of visiting Banaras. Accordingly, this temple was built by Rani Rasmani. Sthalapurana says that Ma Kali used to take prasad from the hand of Sri Ramakrishna. There are twelve Siva Lingas in twelve sannidhis in a row. Hence this temple is also popularly known as Baarah Mahadev Temple.

There is another temple for Ma Kali known as Adyapith, 2 Km away from this temple.From Dakshineswar, one can also visit Belur Math, a beautifully constructed memorial of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Ma Sarada Devi.

2. TARAKESWAR

67 Km from Calcutta via Dakshineswar.

BABA TARAKNATH TEMPLE

The presiding deity of this famous temple is known as Baba Taraknath. This is a Swayambhu Linga.It is believed that worship of Baba Taraknath fulfills one's desires and also cures several diseases. The traditional form of worship is to pour Ganges water over Baba Taraknath. The pilgrims assemble at Sheoraphuli, where they take bath at Baidyanathbati Nimai Ghat and fill two earthen pitchers with sacred water of the Ganges and carry the same in the form of Kavad. They walk barefoot with the Kavad to a distance of 35 Km. upto the temple and perform the abhishekam. This is done especially in the month of Sravan, i.e. July/August, every year. According to the Sthalapurana, there was a cowherd, named Mukund, who was owning a cow called Kapila. For some days, Mukund observed that Kapila used to rub her body against a particular palm tree and poured her milk at the spot spontaneously. On digging at the spot, Mukund found a beautiful stone and, as it was struck by the

axe, water began to flow from the stone and the same was white and tasty. The innocent cowherd used that stone for grinding wheat, rice, etc. Once, Lord Siva appeared in his dream and told him that the stone was none other than Lord Siva Himself. The news reached Bharamull, the King of Ramnagar. He came here and tried to lift the stone with a view to taking it to his palace, but it could not be removed. Lord Siva appeared in his dream and told him to build a temple there itself. Hence this temple was built by the King.

3. BALASORE

238 Km from Tarakeswar via Arambagh and Kharagpur.

BANESWAR MAHADEV TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Baneswar Mahadev and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that Banasur worshipped the Lord here.

4. PANCHALINGESWAR

30 Km from Balasore via Sergarh.

PANCHALINGESWAR TEMPLE

There are five Siva Lingas known as Panchalingeswar on a beautiful hillock with a perennial stream of water flowing over them. It is said that Banasur worshipped these Lingas. People also visit here to enjoy the natural beauty of the place.

5. ARADI

115 Km from Panchalingeswar via Sergarh and Bhadrak.

AKHANDALMONI MAHADEV TEMPLE

The presiding deity is known as Akhandalmoni Mahadev and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The Lord here is very famous for fulfilling the desires of His devotees.It is believed that physical ailments also get cured here.

6. JAJPUR TOWN

83 Km from Aradi via Sathipur. There are two important temples.

1. VIRAJADEVI TEMPLE

This is one of the most celebrated Saktipeethas and considered to be Nabhipeetha. The Goddess is known as Viraja Devi. It is stated in the Sthalapurana that Lord Brahma performed a Yagna here and Goddess Viraja Devi appeared from the Yagnakund. That is why this place was formerly known as Yajapur, now called Jajpur. It is well known as Nabhi Gaya where pilgrims offer Shraddhas and Tarpans for their forefathers. Hence this place attracts pilgrims from all over the country.

2. TRILOCHAN MAHADEV TEMPLE

This is a small temple situated about 1 Km from Viraja Devi Temple. The Lord is known as Trilochan Mahadev. It is said that Ravana did penance and worshipped the Lord here.

Besides these, the temples dedicated to Lord Ganesa, Saptamatruka and Lord Yagnavarah (incarnation of Lord Vishnu) on the bank of the River Vaitarani at Dasasvamedha Ghat, are worth visiting.

7. CHANDIKHOL

57 Km from Jajpur town via Chandikhola. There are two important temples.

1. CHANDI TEMPLE

The presiding deity is known as Mother Chandi. This place is also endowed with natural beauty and, at the instance of Sadhu Bhairabanandaji, a number of cottages have been set up for accommodation of the visitors. A perennial stream of water is flowing from the hill near the temple.

2. MAHAVINAYAK SIVA TEMPLE

This temple is situated about 2 Km from the Chandi Temple. The presiding deity, a large natural Linga, is known as Mahavinayak, representing five Gods, viz., Ganapati, Rudra, Narayan, Surya and Sakti Devi. A perennial stream of water is flowing from the hill near the temple. The natural scenery surrounding the temple is captivating and the atmosphere very calm and quiet. It is an ideal environment for meditation.

8. KAPILAS

68 Km from Chandikhol via Nihalprasad and Deogaon.

CHANDRASEKHAR TEMPLE

The temple is situated on a hilltop, at a height of about 1500 ft. There is a good ghat road, besides 1300 steps, to go to the temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Chandrasekhar and the Goddess,Devi Parvati. There are caves on the hill associated with pauranic episodes, and the hill is identified with Mount Kailas. There are also two other temples at a higher altitude dedicated to Lord Kashi Viswanath and Lord Narayan (Vishnu). It is interesting to watch a perennial stream of water gushing forth from the right foot of Narayan.

9. DHAVALESWAR

58 Km from Kapilas via Deogaon and Dhenkanal on way to Cuttack.

DHAVALESWAR MAHADEV TEMPLE

The temple is situated on a small island-hill in the River Mahanadi. Pilgrims have to go by a boat to reach the temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Dhavaleswar Mahadev and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The speciality of the Linga is that there is a very large hole inside the Sakti. The Sakti is about 18 feet in diameter and has a deep and bottomless hole in the centre. Hence this is known as Sunya Linga.

10. CUTTACK

27 Km from Dhavaleswar. There are three important temples.

1. GADAGADESWAR MAHADEV TEMPLE

This is a small and ancient temple situated on the bank of the River Mahanadi in Tulsipur area, about 5 Km from Cuttack Railway Station, opposite to the Barabati Stadium The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Gadagadeswar Mahadev and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The Lingamurti is placed below the ground level. It is said that the merchants in ancient days used to start their business voyages from here on Kartik Poornima Day for Bali, Java and Sumatra Islands. Since then, the day is being known as Bali Yatra day. This day is also celebrated by the people here in memory of Sri Chaitanya Maha Prabhu's visit to this place during the 16th century on his way to Puri. There are sannidhis for Satyanarayan Swamy, Sri Radhakrishna, Sri Ramachandra and Anjaneya. There is also a Sannidhi for Subramanya

Swamy, installed by Sri Jayendra Saraswati, Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham.

2. CHANDI TEMPLE

The temple is situated in Sekh Bazar area which is about 1 Km from Gadagadeswar Mahadev Temple. The ruling deity, Goddess Chandi, is considered to be an Amsa of Siva Sakti, who fulfills the prayers of Her devotees. Dasahara festival is celebrated here for 16 days and, during this period, the Goddess is adorned each day according to the Amsas of Sakti, like Mahalakshmi, Saraswati, Durga, Kali, etc.

3. PATALESWAR TEMPLE

This ancient temple is in Buxi Bazar area, about 1 Km from Chandi Temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Pataleswar or Amareswar. This Swayambhu Linga is placed below the ground level.

11. BHUBANESWAR

23 Km from Cuttack. There are three important temples.

1. LINGARAJ TEMPLE

This is one of the most important temples.The main gopuram is 127 ft. high, constructed without mortar and divided into vertical sections and horizontal ribs. The presiding deity is known as Tribhuvaneswar or Lingaraj. This is a swayambhu linga represented by an uncarved block of granite stone 8 ft. in diameter and rising 8 inches above the floor level and surrounded by a rim of black chlorite, tapering to a point in the north direction. Pilgrims can themselves perform pujas and abhishekas with the help of the Pandits and an offering of Vilva and tulsi leaves, unlike in other Siva

temples, is done by chanting Harihara Mantra because it is a combination of Hari (Vishnu) and Hara (Siva). Tradition says that those who intend to have the yatra to Lord Jagannath at Puri should first visit this temple, otherwise the yatra is futile. It is said that even Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu first had the darshan of Lord Lingaraj before he went to Puri. Pauranic legend says that this Ekamra Kanana was a more favourite resort of Siva than Kashi and this fact was once revealed by Siva to Parvati. Out of curiosity the Devi came to this spot in disguise of a cowherd woman. Two demons named Kritti and Vasa came up to Her and expressed their desire to marry Her. She asked them first to carry Her on their shoulders. When they did, the two demons were crushed due to the superhuman weight caused on them by the Goddess. She was tired and thirsty after killing these demons. Lord Siva with His trishul caused a tank for Her and invited all the sacred rivers, lakes, etc. to lend to this tank a drop of water each. Hence this tank is known as Bindusagar. A ceremonial bath in this tank with Shraddhas and Tarpans is considered highly virtuous. In the centre of the tank is a Jalamandir where the Lord is brought, once in a year, for Tirumanjanam. On the eastern side of the tank is Ananta Vasudeva Temple, popularly known as Bindhu Madhav Temple, the only Vishnu Temple in Bhubaneswar.

2. KEDARESWAR TEMPLE

This temple is about 1 Km northeast of the Lingaraj Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kedareswar and the Goddess, Gouri Devi. There is a well where water is available throughout the year which has medicinal properties and heals various diseases, including intestinal disorders. It is believed that Sahastra Lingas (a thousand lingas) are there beneath the water.

3. MUKTESWAR TEMPLE

This temple is very close to the Kedareswar Temple.The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mukteswar. This is one of the most beautiful temples and is called a 'dream in sandstone'. There is a 'parrot gate' which deserves a special mention. The overhead stone canopy inside the temple is a remarkable piece of carving.

Besides these temples, nearby temples of Parashurameswar and Raj-Rani are worth visiting.

12. BARAL

38 Km from Bhubaneswar via Pipli and Patnaikia on way to Puri.

BALUNKESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Balunkeswar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhu Linga. The Lord here is famous for fulfilling the desires of His devotees and healing of incurable diseases.

13. CHANDANPUR

14 Km from Baral via Patnaikia on way to Puri.

KAPOTESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kapoteswar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that Lord Siva Himself, in the form of a bird (Kapota), did penance here. It is believed that Mahavishnu worshipped the Lord here.

14. PURI

11 Km from Chandanpur. There are three important temples.

1. LOKANATHESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Lokanatheswar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The Linga is submerged in water which is said to be coming out of the head of the Linga. It is said that, once in a year on Sivaratri day, the water is drained out when the Linga can be seen with the water oozing out of the head.

2. MARKANDESWAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of Markandeya Tank about 3 Km. from Lokanatheswar Temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Markandeswar.

3. NILAKANTHESWAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of the Indradyumna Tank about 1 Km from Markandeswar Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Nilakantheswar.

15. ATRI

77 Km from Puri via Pipli, Jatni, Khurda and Baghamari.

HATAKESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Hatakeswar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. About half a kilometre away from the temple there is a hot sulphur water spring which has medicinal properties to cure skin diseases.

16. SARANKUL

62 Km from Atri via Rajsunakhela and Nayagarh.

LADUKESWAR MAHADEV TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as

Ladukeswar Mahadev and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. He is also popularly known as Ladu Baba. The Lord is very famous for fulfilling the desires of His devotees and healing of incurable diseases.

17. BANPUR

110 Km from Sarankul via Nayagarh, Rajsunakhela, Chandpur and Balugaon. There are two temples.

1. BHAGAVATI TEMPLE

The Goddess adorning this temple is known as Bhagavati and considered to be very powerful.

2. DAKSHA PRAJAPATI TEMPLE

This temple of Lord Siva is known as Daksha Prajapati Temple. The architectural beauty of this temple is very attractive and worth seeing.

18. NARAYANI

20 Km from Banpur via Balugaon.

NARAYANI TEMPLE

This temple is situated on a hill surrounded by ashoka trees. The powerful Goddess dwelling in this temple is known as Narayani (Van Durga). A perennial stream of water is flowing from the hill near the temple. In front of the Goddess, there is a Siva Linga known as Nilakantheswar.

19. PRATAPGARH

60 Km from Narayani via Rambha and Huma on way to Purushottampur.

TUMBESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Tumbeswar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The legend is that Sri Ramachandra, during his exile, established a Linga of gourd(tumba) and worshipped the Lord here. This was discovered by the villagers when a cow trampled over it. Since the Linga is made of tumba, the Lord is known as Tumbeswar.

20. TARA TARINI

20 Km from Pratapgarh via Purushottampur.

TARA TARINI TEMPLE

This temple is situated on a hilltop at a height of about 1000 ft. There is a good ghat road, besides 1000 steps, to go to the temple. This is a temple of twin Goddesses known as Tara and Tarini. This place is believed to be one of the Saktipeethas as the two breasts of the corpse of Sati are stated to have fallen here.

21. MUKHALINGAM

191 Km from Tara Tarini via Berhampur, Narasannapeta and Salpeta.

MUKHALINGESWARA TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of the River Vamshadhara and built in Kalinga style. The presiding deity is known as Mukhalingeswara, originally known as Madhukesvara. The Goddess is known as Devi Varahi. Contrary to popular notion, the Lingamurti in the sanctum has no face carved on it. According to the legend, Rishi Vamadeva performed a Yagna but the gandharvas, wh

were supposed to take their Havirbhava, failed to attend the Yagna as they were at that time with Kirataka women. Annoyed, Rishi Vamadeva cursed them to become Kiratakas and on their repentance the Rishi said that they should perform puja to Mukhalingeswara during the Kaliyuga. Accordingly they worshipped the Lord here and thus they were relieved of their curse. This place is regarded as equal to Kashi. There are two more temples, Someswara Temple and Bhimeswara Temple. It is believed that Someswara Linga was installed by the Moon. In Bhimeswara Temple, there are two Nandis instead of one as in other Siva temples.

22. SRIKAKULAM

50 Km from Mukhalingam via Salpeta and Narasannapeta. There are two important temples.

1.SURYANARAYANA SWAMY TEMPLE (ARASAVILLI)

The presiding deity is known as Suryanarayana Swamy (Sun God). A 40 day ritual here is done preferably during the cold season because of the arduousness of the ritual, which includes 108 Pradakshinas of the sanctum and worship of the deity every day. It is believed that performance of the above ritual helps to improve the eye sight and cures several other ailments. The sun's rays focus at the very feet of the deity twice in a year in the months of February and June at the early hours of the day. The Lord here is Swayamvakta and known as Kalivarada, a grantor of boons in the Kaliyuga. According to the legend, once Indra, ignoring the words of the gate-keeper Nandi, attempted to force his entry into the ancient temple of Rudra Koteeswara Swamy at an untimely hour when Lord Siva was alone with His consort, Parvati. The gate-keeper, Nandi, while discharging his duties, kicked the intruder out. Indra fell down senseless about two miles away.

In the unconscious state, Indra dreamt that he would be relieved of his pain of injury if he would build a temple and install a murti of the Sun God. Following the dream, he picked up a handful of earth three times from the place where he was lying and, to his great joy, found a beautiful idol of Sun God with His three consorts : Usha, Padmini and Chhaya. Thus, Indra founded this temple.

2. RUDRA KOTEESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is about 3 Km from Suryanarayana Swamy Temple and situated on the bank of the River Nagavali. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Rudra Koteeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhu Linga. It is said that Balarama worshipped the Lord here. There is also a separate sanctum for Sri Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Anjaneya.

23. *ANNAVARAM*

220 Km from Srikakulam via Visakhapatnam.

SATYANARAYANA SWAMY TEMPLE

The temple is situated on a small hillock called Ratnagiri on the bank of the River Pampa.There is a good ghat road, besides running steps, leading to the temple. The presiding deity is Lord Satyanarayana Swamy and the Goddess, Anantalakshmi Satyavati. The temple is in three storeys, the first storey for Lord Brahma, the second for Lord Siva and the third for Lord Vishnu as Satyanarayana Swamy, indicating the culmination of all the three Gods - the Creator, the Protector and the Destroyer. Hence this place is known as Trimurti Kshetra and considered very important. Pilgrims visit this temple daily in hundreds and perform Satyanarayana Vrat. The Lord gave darshan to Adi Sankara

here. There is a sannidhi for Sri Rama. There are big halls where marriages are performed.

24. PITHAPURAM

32 Km from Annavaram on way to Kakinada.

KUKKUTESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Swayambhu Linga in the form of a 'cock' is known as Kukkuteswara Swamy. Water flowing from the beak of the Linga accumulates in a pond. The Goddess is known as Rajarajeswari. This is also one of the Saktipeethas and known as Puruhoothika Peetha. The legend is that there was a Rakshasa, known as Gaya, ruling this place. To destroy him, the Trimurtis, in the form of three brahmins, appeared before him and asked to give them a place here to perform a Yagna for seven days without any interruption. The mighty Rakshasa told that they could perform the Yagna on his body itself and also agreed that there would be no interruption during the Yagna. The Trimurtis also warned him that he would be killed if they face any interruption from him. Six days were over and the Trimurtis wanted to create some interruption. So, Lord Maheswara, on the seventh day, cried out in the form of a cock after the midnight. On hearing the same the Rakshasa thought that the seventh day was over and woke up. Immediately he was killed by the Trimurtis. That is why the Linga here is with the face of the cock. There is also Gayasura Pada at the entrance of the temple and hence it is known as Pada Gaya. Shraddhas and Tarpans are peformed here.

25. SAMALKOT

13 Km from Pithapuram.

BHIMARAMA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is the second of the Pancharama Kshetras. The presiding deity is Lord Bhimarama with Goddess Bala Tripurasundari. The Linga which is known as Yogalinga extends upto three storeys and one has to climb stairs to have a full view for which there are arrangements. The legend says that once there was a war between the Devas and Tarakasura. Ultimately, Tarakasura won the battle. The Devas then got frightened and went to Lord Siva who told them that it would not be possible for him to kill Tarakasura because he was a great Siva bhakta. This shows how the efficacy of bhakti so completely overwhelms the Lord that He finds Himself not competent to deal with one who is a great bhakta. Finally, Lord Siva deputed Kumaraswamy to lead the army of the Devas for a fight with Taraka. Lord Siva also told them that Tarakasura was carrying a Siva Linga in his throat and his very life was in that Linga. Hence He suggested that if they could break that Linga, then Tarakasura would die. He also told them that the broken pieces of the Linga would grow in the Kshetras where they fell, so they should go immediately to those places and establish the Lingas to arrest their further growth. Accordingly, Kumaraswamy broke the Linga into five pieces which were set up at five places. These five places came to be known as Pancharama Kshetras. All the five Lingas are said to have been worshipped by the Sapta Rishis, Sri Rama and other Devas.

26. DRAKSHARAMA

35 Km from Samalkot via Kakinada.

DRAKSHARAMA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is the first of the Pancharama Kshetras.

This is a very big temple with a seven storeyed gopuram. The presiding deity is Lord Draksharama with the Goddess, Manikyamba.This is a Spatika Linga known as Bhoga Linga. It is 15 feet high and resembles a Dwajastambha, and can be seen in two tiers. There is a well (Koovam) known as Rudra Tirtha. It is said that the image of Goddess Manikyamba was found in this well and then installed in the temple. It is believed that this is the place where Dakshaprajapati performed the Yagna where he did not invite Lord Siva, his son-in-law. As Dakshyayani (Sati) immolated Herself for the insult of Lord Siva, the Lord sent Veerabhadra to destroy the Yagna and punish Daksha. Thereafter no Yagna is performed here. It is also believed that Annapurna Devi drove out the great Sage Vyasa from Kashi to test his patience. Vyasa came here and worshipped the Lord. The place is also known as Dakshin Kashi. There are separate sannidhis for Kashi Visweswara and Annapurna Devi. There is also a sannidhi for Sankaranarayanaswamy, a symbolical representation of the oneness of Lord Siva and Vishnu. Also at the main entrance of the temple, there is a sannidhi for Ganapati, who is the fulfiller of the desires of His bhaktas. The tirth is known as Saptagodavari Pushkarini.

27. KOTIPALLI

9 Km from Draksharama.

SOMESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Someswaraswamy and the Goddess, Rajarajeswari Ammavaru. It is said that Moon (Chandra) once committed a heinous sin, whereby he lost his natural brilliance and

lustre. He came down to earth lamenting for his sin and bathed in the Koti Tirtham here by which he became perfect and regained his lustre. He therefore installed a linga and worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Someswaraswamy. It is said that Indra also got his Shapa Vimochana after taking bath in the Koti Tirtham and worshipping the Lord here. The Koti Tirtham thus became famous since a bath in it washes off all kinds of sins. There is a sannidhi for Lord Vishnu known as Siddhi Janardhana.

28. KSHANA MUKTESWARAM

This place is 3 Km after crossing the River Godavari from Kotipalli by boat. Cars can also be taken by boat. There are two important temples.

1. KSHANA MUKTESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kshana Mukteswara Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that Kousika Maharishi installed the Linga and worshipped the Lord here. Here it is a belief that who ever takes a dip in the sacred Pushkarini and has a darshan of this Linga, will be relieved of his sins immediately. Hence the Lord is known as Kshana Mukteswara Swamy. There is a sannidhi for Lord Vishnu known as Keshavaswamy.

2. VIGNESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE (AIANVELI)

This temple is 2 km from Kshana Mukteswara Temple. Here Lord Vinayaka is in Swayambhu form. It is said that Dakshaprajapati worshipped this Vinayaka. The sannidhi is facing South. There are also sannidhis for Lord Kashi Visveswara, Devi Annapurna and Keshavaswamy.

29. DHAVALESWARAM

49 Km from Kshana Mukteswaram via Kotipalli and Alamuru on way to Rajahmundry.

AGASTYESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Agastyeswaraswamy and the Goddess, Bala Tripurasundari. It is believed that Sri Rama, en route to Lanka, worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sapta Godavari Tirtham. There is also a sannidhi for Satyanarayanaswamy which is a common feature in all the temples in this region. Sri Rama's Padukas are enshrined at the bank of the River Godavari which can be seen.

30. RAJAHMUNDRY

8 Km from Dhavaleswaram. There are two important temples.

1. MARKANDESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of the River Godavari. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Markandeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Uma. There is also a separate sanctum for Venkateswara Swamy.

2. KOTILINGESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is also situated on the bank of the River Godavari about 3Km. from Markandeswara Swamy Temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kotilingeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Chakra Bhuvaneswari. It is believed that Gautama Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. There is a separate sanctum for Venkateswara Swamy.

Pushkar festival is held here once in 12 years on the bank of the River Godavari which attracts lacs of pilgrims from far and wide.

31. PATTISEEMA

29 Km from Rajahmundry via Kovvur towards Polavaram.

VEERABHADRASWAMYTEMPLE

This temple is located on a rocky island in the middle of the River Godavari. Pilgrims have to go by a boat to reach the temple. When the river is in spate, this temple is not approachable. It is said that this place is one of the 'Pancha Maha Siva Kshetras'. The presiding deity of this temple is Lord Veerabhadra Swamy. When Dakshyayani immolated Herself in the Yagnakund, Lord Siva created Veerabhadraswamy to destroy the Yagna and punish Daksha. The two Devis who are worshipped here are known as Ariswari and Puniswari. It is believed that those who do not have children, if they worship these Devis, are blessed with children.

32. RYALI

61 Km from Pattiseema via Kovvur, Dhavaleswaram and Raovulapalem

KAMANDALESWARA SWAMYTEMPLE

This temple is situated infront of the famous Jaganmohini Keshavaswamy Temple. It is stated that when Vishnu took the form of Mohini and distributed the Amrit to the Devas, She looked immensely beautiful. At the sight of

her, Lord Siva was infatuated and, when He came to know that it was Vishnu in the form of Mohini, He decided to settle down at this place. At that time, Brahma appeared and, with the Kamandal, established a Siva Linga. Hence the Lord is known as Kamandaleswaraswamy. The Goddess is known as Uma Devi.

33. VADALI

21 Km from Ryali via Raovulapalem and Siddanthan.

AGASTYESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord enshrined in this temple is known as Agastyeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhu Linga. The temple has been recently renovated and is well maintained.

34. ACHANTA

17 Km from Vadali via Penukonda.

RAMESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of the River Vasishtha. It is believed that this Linga was installed by Sri Rama and hence the Lord is known as Rameswaraswamy. The Goddess is known as Uma Devi. The tirth is known as Ramakunda.

35. PALAKOLLU

18 Km from Achanta.

KSHIRARAMA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is the fourth of the Pancharama Kshetras.

The presiding deity is Lord Kshiraramaswamy and the Goddess,Devi Parvati. The Linga, which is white in colour like milk, represents the head portion(Siro Bhava) of the broken Linga.

36. BHIMAVARAM

22 Km from Palakollu. There are two temples.

1. BHIMESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord is known as Bhimeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Bala Tripurasundari. The Goddess is also known as Mahishasura Mardhini.

2. SOMARAMA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is in Gunipidi Village, about 1 Km from Bhimavaram. This is the third of the Pancharama Kshetras and regarded very important as the Linga represents the facial portion(Mukho Bhava) of the broken Linga. The presiding deity is Lord Somarama Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati.

37. MOPIDEVI

118 Km from Bhimavaram via Gudivada and Challapally.

SUBRAMANYESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Subramanyeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that this Linga was installed by Agastya Maharishi.

There is another temple known as Sakaleswaraswamy temple. This is a Swayambhu Linga. It is believed that this Linga extends down to Patala.

38. PEDAKALLEPALLY

9 Km from Mopidevi.

NAGESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The temple is situated on the bank of the River Krishna. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Nageswara Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that eight sons of Kashyapa Maharishi installed the Linga and worshipped the Lord here. It is believed that Sri Rama and Agastya Maharishi also worshipped the Lord here.

39. VIJAYAWADA

76 Km from Pedakallepally via Challapally and Pamarru. There are two important temples.

1. KANAKADURGA TEMPLE

This temple is situated on a hill known as Indra Kiladri in the north of the River Krishna. It is believed that the Goddess appeared in Swayambhu form as Swarna Roopini and after killing Mahishasura stayed here as Kanaka Durga. It is because of Her victory (Vijaya) over the asuras, the place is called as Vijayawada. Puja is also performed for the Sri Chakra installed by Adi Sankara. There is a separate sannidhi for Lord Nataraja and Goddess Sivakami.

2. MALLESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This is situated just below Kanakadurga Temple. The Lord is known as Malleswaraswamy because Arjuna had a mallayudha with the Lord here. According to legend, Arjuna did tapasya to get Pashupatastra from the Lord. Lord Siva wanted to test his sincerity before granting him the boon. He therefore appeared before him in the disguise of a hunter and

started chasing a wild boar on the Indrakila hill. The wild boar came to the side of Arjuna. Arjuna, being a great warrior, took up his bow and shot it with a single arrow. At the same time, Lord Siva, who was following the boar, also shot it with an arrow. Struck by both the arrows, the boar fell dead. Both claimed the boar as their kill. A controversy arose between them as to whom the boar should belong. Words led to a quarrel and the hunter and Arjuna began to wrestle (Mallayudha) with each other. Arjuna was an experienced and a powerful wrestler. But he was no match to the 'hunter' and was soon exhausted. To invoke divine aid in his favour, he made a Sivalinga out of the earth, and offered prayers to it. The flowers with which he worshipped the Linga, were seen by him falling on the hunter standing before him. He thereupon realised that the hunter was none other than the Lord Himself. The hunter immediately disappeared and the Lord appeared before Arjuna. Arjuna prayed to the Lord and received the Pashupatastra from Him.

40. MANGALAGIRI

13 Km from Vijayawada on way to Guntur.

MALLESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is situated at the foot of a hill known as Mangala Giri. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Malleswaraswamy and the Goddess, Brahmarambika. There is a big tank known as Kalyan Saras.

41. PEDAKAKANI

12 Km from Mangalagiri.

SAMBA SIVA TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Sambasiva

and the Goddess, Brahmaramba. On every Sunday, thousands of devotees visit this temple and offer their prarthanas in the form of carriages, prabhas and such other things. It is believed that sick persons and those who are not bestowed with children, often stay here for some time and do pradakshinas by which they get their wishes fulfilled.

42. AMARAVATI

44 Km from Pedakakani via Guntur.

AMARARAMA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is the last of the Pancharama Kshetras. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Amararamaswamy and the Goddess, Bala Chamundika Devi. The big Spatika Linga is 15 feet high and 3 feet in diameter. The temple is built at a height of 5 feet from the ground level and it is a great mystery from time immemorial what lies underground. It is regarded as a very sacred place and believed that if a devotee stays here for three days and worships the Lord after taking a dip in the River Krishna, he attains salvation (Mukti). It is believed that Lord Amararamaswamy is none other than Lord Viswanath of Kashi and hence the river, even though it is known as Krishna, has the effect of Ganga here. It is said that Indra and Kapila Maharishi worshipped the Lord here.

43. KOTTAPPA KONDA

68 Km from Amaravati via Sattenapally and Narasaraopet.

TRIKUTESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The temple is situated at the top of a hill. There are

1000 steps to reach the sanctum, with resting platforms on the way to ease the strain. The presiding deity of this temple is Lord Trikuteswaraswamy which means 'The Lord of the three peaks'. The Goddess is known as Devi Parvati. According to the legend, after the destruction of Daksha Yagna, Lord Siva was roaming with the corpse of Sati. Mahavishnu cut the corpse into pieces with his Chakra. After this episode, Lord Siva rested here. There are two more hills here having a small temple on each of them.

44. CHEZERLA

45 Km from Kottappakonda via Narasaraopet.

KAPOTESWARASWAMY TEMPLE

The main deity of this temple is known as Kapoteswaraswamy. It is a well known story of the Mahabharata that King Sibi was doing penance and a Yagna to have a darshan of Lord Siva. To test his devotion, the Trimurtis : Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara, came to him as Bow, Kapota (Dove) and hunter respectively. As the hunter was chasing the dove with his bow, the Kapota took refuge with King Sibi. In order to save the Kapota, the king agreed to compensate the hunter with his own flesh equal to the weight of the dove. The hunter agreed and Sibi went on cutting his body till nothing was left to match the weight of the dove. At this juncture, Lord Siva appeared and gave darshan to the king. As desired by the king, his body was merged in the linga and that very linga is here known as Kapoteswaraswamy. In the Linga, there are, even today, large cavities said to represent the places of the flesh cut out of the king's body. On the top of the Linga, there are two large vertical cavities. One of these cavities helps to drain off the Abhisheka tirtha. If the Abhisheka tirtha is not drained off with in time, the smell

of raw flesh and blood comes out even today. The deity is said to be powerful and any prayer that is done is generally granted here.

45. TRIPURANTAKAM

74 Km from Chezerla via Vinukonda on way to Srisailam.

TRIPURANTAKESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is on a small hill known as Kumara Giri. The Lord is known as Tripurantakeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Tripurasundari. The Lord's temple is on the top of the hill and the Goddess's temple is at the foot of the hill.

46. SRISAILAM

97 Km from Tripurantakam via Dornala and Sikhareswar.

MALLIKARJUNA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the Rishaba Hill, on the southern bank of the River Krishna. This is one of the 12 Jyotir Linga Kshetras. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mallikarjuna and the Goddess, Devi Brahmaramba. The greatness of the Lord here is mentioned in Kaivalyopanishad and Skanda Puranam. It is said that Hiranyakashipu in the Kritayuga, Sri Rama in the Tretayuga, Pancha Pandavas in the Dwaparayuga and Adi Sankara in the Kaliyuga worshipped the Lord here. Those who visit this temple and have a darshan of Srisailasikhar from Sikhareswar will attain mukti. It is said that Devi Brahmaramba fought with Mahishasura and killed him. The Asura's blood spilled everywhere, but no blood spilled here. Hence the Devi chose

this place to dwell in. This place is also regarded as one of the Saktipeethas. Chhatrapati Shivaji used to visit here to worship Brahmaramba every year. Adi Sankara composed his popular works Sivananda Lahiri, Brahmaramba Ashtakas, Dwadasa Linga Stotras, etc., here. The tirth is the River Krishna and known as Patala Ganga which is 3 Kms down the hill. The water of the river is seen green in colour but colourless when taken in hand. It is said that Chandragupta, due to a curse, turned into a green stone which fell into the river. Hence the water is seen green due to the presence of this stone.

47. HANUMKONDA

331 Km from Srisailam via Hyderabad.

THOUSAND PILLARED TEMPLE

This Siva Temple is very famous and known here as a thousand pillared temple. The architecture and art of this temple resemble those of the Chalukyas'. The temple is half-finished. It has gates for entrance on three sides with beautiful art work.

48. PALAMPET

66 Km from Hanumkonda via Mulug.

RAMALINGASWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of Ramappa Sarasu. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ramalingaswamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This temple resembles the temple in Hanumkonda. The art work on the pillars and doorways is worth seeing.

49. VEMULWADA

148 Km from Palampet via Goonpur, Parkal, Hazurabad and Karimnagar.

RAJARAJESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Rajarajeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Rajarajeswari. There is a tirth known as Dharmakundam. It is said that King Narendra, grandson of Arjuna, while hunting in a forest, killed a Rishi by mistake and thus inflicted upon himself brahmahatya dosha. He went to many tirthas to get rid of the dosha but could not. At last, he came here and, after a dip in the Dharmakundam, got salvation. Lord Siva appeared in his dream and directed him to take the Siva Linga lying in the Dharmakundam and install the same here. Thus King Narendra founded this temple. It is also said that Indra, who was burdened with the sin of brahmahatya on killing Kritasura, got relief after bathing in the Dharmakundam.

50. ALAMPUR

365 Km from Vemulwada via Sirsilla, Siddipet, Hyderabad and Jadcherla.

BALA BRAHMESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of the River Tungabhadra. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Bala Brahmeswaraswamy. It is said that Brahma performed a penance here for thousands of years. Lord Siva was pleased and conferred on him the power of creation. The Goddess is known as Yogini or Jogulamba. This is also regarded as one of the Saktipeethas. The tirth is known as Papavinasana Tirtham. This temple is a part of a cluster of

Nava Brahma temples here. They are

1. Kumara Brahma
2. Arka Brahma
3. Veera Brahma
4. Padma Brahma
5. Viswa Brahma
6. Garuda Brahma
7. Taraka Brahma
8. Swarga Brahma
9. Bala Brahma

51. KALVABUGGA

61 Km from Alampur via Kurnool.

BUGGA RAMESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Bugga Rameswaraswamy and the Goddess, Brahmaramba. It is said that Parashurama installed the Linga and worshipped the Lord here. Beautiful streams of water are there within the temple.

52. MAHANANDI

57 Km from Kalvabugga via Pandyam and Nandyal

MAHANANDESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mahanandeswar and the Goddess, Kameswari. There are

three kundas known as Brahma Kunda, Rudra Kunda and Vishnu Kunda. This temple is situated in the centre of Rudra Kunda. Water from a stream near the temple comes here through the mouth of a Nandi, which contains disease curing minerals. According to legend, Mahananda, the son of Silada Rishi, did a tapasya here. Lord Siva was pleased with his devotion and asked him for any boon he wanted. Mahananda desired that he should be accepted by the Lord to serve Him as His Vahan for ever. Lord Siva accepted him as his vahan and also said that this place would be called Mahanandi Kshetram. There are nine Nandi temples within a radius of 16 Kms. from this place known as Nava Nandalu (Nine Nandis). They are :-

1. Padma Nandi
2. Naga Nandi
3. Vinayaka Nandi
4. Garuda Nandi
5. Brahma Nandi
6. Surya Nandi
7. Vishnu Nandi
8. Soma Nandi
9. Siva Nandi

The traditional belief is that the worship of these nine Nandis should be completed in a day.

53. NANDAVARAM

52 Km from Mahanandi via Nandyal and Pandyam on way to Banganapalli.

KASHI CHOMUNDESWARI DEVI TEMPLE

The presiding deity is known as Kashi Chomundeswari Devi believed to be very powerful. Special pujas are offered every day.

54. YAGANTIPALLI

20 Km from Nandavaram via Banganapalli.

UMA MAHESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

In this temple, the Lord and the Goddess are enshrined on one peetham and known as Umamaheswara. The Nandi here is known as Basavayya. It is observed that this Nandi is growing in size every year. Veerabrahmendra Swamy in his book Kalagnana, has mentioned that when this Basavayya will cry that will be the last day for Kaliyuga. A perennial stream of water is flowing from the hill near the temple.

55. TADPATRI

72 Km from Yagantipalli via Banganapalli.

BUGGA RAMALINGESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The temple is situated on the bank of River Pinakini. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Bugga Ramalingeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhu linga. In the sanctum water comes out from an unknown place. It is said that Parashurama worshipped the Lord here The entire Siva Purana is carved in stone on the walls with delicate skill and in elaborate detail.

56. TIRUPATI

248 Km from Tadpatri via Kamalapuram, Cuddapah, and Renigunta.

KAPILESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE (ALIPIRI)

This is situated 2 Km from Tirupati on way to Tirumalai. The presiding deity of this temple is Kapileswara Swamy with Devi Kamakshi. It is believed that Kapila Maharishi worshipped the Lord here.

57. TONDAVADA

9 Km from Tirupati.

AGASTYESWARA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Agastyeswara Swamy and the Goddess, Anandavalli. It is believed that Agastya Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. It is said that Goddess Padmavati also worshipped the Lord here.

58. SRI KALAHASTI

47 Km from Tondavada via Tirupati and Renigunta.

SRIKALAHASTISWARA TEMPLE

This is one of the 'Pancha Bhoota Kshetras' and represents Vayu and therefore known as Vayu Kshetra. To prove that, the lamp inside the sanctum keeps flickering without any circulation of air. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Srikalahastiswara and the Goddess, Gnanaprasoonnambika. The sannidhi is facing west. There is no separate sannidhi for the Navagrahas. They are

arranged in the form of a Kavacha to the Lingam. As this place is also considered as a Rahu-Ketu Kshetra, people who suffer from the unfavourable influences of Rahu and Ketu worship the Lord here and are believed to get relief.Lord Vinayaka's temple is situated 30 feet below the ground level and hence called Patala Vinayaka. The Legend is that a Spider (Sri), a Serpent (Kala) and an Elephant (Hasti) worshipped a Swayambhu Linga that existed in this forest under a Vilva tree. The spider used to weave a web over the Linga to prevent the leaves falling over it. The elephant used to perform abhishekam by bringing water in its trunk and spurting it over the Linga. The serpent used to spread its hood over the Linga to protect it from the scorching sun. All the three devotees were unaware about one another. One day, noticing the abhishekam and vilva leaves, the serpent suspected that there was someone who had encroached the sanctum. Afraid that this might cause harm to the Lord, he entwined himself round the Linga determined to protect it against any possible danger. When the elephant came with the usual abhisheka tirtha, the furious serpent got into the trunk of the elephant. Unable to bear the pain, the elephant smashed its trunk over the Linga, crushing both the serpent and the spider to death. He also died on the spot due to the poisonous bite of the serpent. Lord Siva, pleased with the sincerity of their devotion, granted salvation to all the three. Hence the Lord is known as Srikalahastiswara. The images of all the three devotees are embossed on the Linga. There is another interesting devotional story associated with this temple. There was a great Sivabhakta called Kannappa. He was a hunter and was known as Tinnappa. He used to offer the flesh of animals to the Lord as a sacrament but only after tasting them first as to whether they were good enough to be offered to the Lord. To test his sincerity and devotion, the Lord one day made it appear as if water was dropping from

one of His eyes on the Linga. Tinnappa thought that someone had harmed the Lord and immediately without any hesitation removed one of his own eyes and offered it to the Lord in place of the one from which water was flowing. The water from the eye of the Lord stopped at once. After some time Tinnappa noticed that the other eye of the Lord was also affected. He at once began to remove his other eye also to offer it to the Lord. Since on removal of both his eyes he would not be able to see the Lord's eye, he placed his left foot on the Lord's eye, to locate the same for replacement. At that time the Lord, pleased with the depth of his devotion, gave him darshan and restored his eyesight. From then he came to be known as 'Kannappa' which means one who gave his eyes to the Lord. The Lord also ordained that he should be near to Him permanently. Therefore, we find the idol of Kannappa near the Lingamurti and Pujas are first offered to him and then to the Lord. There is also a separate temple for Kannappa Nayanar on the top of the Kailasagiri. This hill is believed to be one of the three 'chips' blown off the Mount Meru by Vayu (God of Wind). The other two 'Chips' fell at Tiruchirappalli (Rock Fort) and Tiruconmalee (in Ceylon) respectively. There are two more hills one known as Durga Hill with a temple dedicated to Goddess Durga and other known as Kumaraswamy Hill with a temple for Lord Subramanya.

59. UTTUKOTTAI

63 Km from Srikalahasti.

PALLIKONDESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Pallikondeswar and the Goddess, Devi Parvatavarushini.

Here one can see Dakshinamurti with Sakti and Nandi, which is a rare feature. There is also a murti of Lord Siva in a lying posture. According to the legend, Lord Siva, after swallowing the Kalakoota (poison), felt a sort of giddiness and took some rest with His head on the lap of the Devi, while Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and the Rishis. Bhrighu, Markandeya, Narada and others attended on Him with anxiety. The effect of the poison was so severe that only Lord Mahadeva could have withstood it.

60. TIRUKKANDALAM

28 Km from Uttukottai via Periapalayam and Kanniputhur.

SIVANANDAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Sivanandar and His consort, Anandavalli. The tirth is known as Nandi Tirtham. It is believed that Maharishi Bhrighu worshipped the Lord here and the Lord gave him darshan in Dakshinamurti swaroop. This ancient temple is now in a dilapidated condition.

61. MADRAS

36 Km from Tirukkandalam. There are eleven important Siva temples within and around the City.

1. KANDASWAMY TEMPLE (PARK TOWN)

This is a big temple with a beautiful gopuram. The presiding deity is Balasubramanya. There are also separate sannidhis for Lord Siva, known as Ramalingeswaraswamy, and for the Goddess, known as Parvatavardhini.

2. CHENNA PURISWARAR TEMPLE (FLOWER BAZAR)

This temple is situated very near to Kandaswamy Temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Chenna Puriswarar and the Goddess, Gnanaprasannavalli. There is also a sannidhi for Chenna Keshava Swamy.

3. MANICKATYAGAR TEMPLE (TIRUVOTRIYUR)

This temple is situated about 9 km from Flower Bazar. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Manickatyagar and the Goddess, Vadivudainayaki. This is a Swayambhu Linga in the form of an ant-hill. It is said that Adi Sankara and Adi Sesha worshipped the Lord here.The Navagraha murtis are in the shape of lingas. The tirth is known as Alaivai Tirtham. The temple had great fame during the mediaeval times. The religious importance was also so great that even the Chola Kings used to attend the festivals of this temple. It is said that the second marriage of Sundaramurti Nayanar with Sangili Nachiar was solemnised in the presence of the Lord. This temple is more remembered for its sacred association with Pattinattar, a great Sivabhakta. He worshipped Lord Siva in many other places but it was here he performed several miracles by his Siddhi and at last got transformed himself into a linga and merged with the Lord. That very linga is here, known as Adi-Linga, in a separate Sannidhi.

4. KAPALISWARAR TEMPLE (MYLAPORE)

This temple is situated near Santhome Beach, about 15 km from Tiruvotriyur. This is an ancient and very beautiful temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kapaliswarar and the Goddess, Karpagambikai. The Lord is facing west and the Goddess is facing south. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham. Lord Vinayaka here is having

uplifted trunk symbolizing that He uplifted the great Tamil Poet Avvayar to heaven. The legend connected with this temple is that once The Creator, Brahma, out of vanity and pride, did not pay respect to Lord Siva and Devi Parvati when he met them at Mount Kailas. Lord Siva, being outraged, pinched one of the heads of Brahma to teach him a lesson. Brahma came down to this place and installed a Linga and worshipped the Lord here. As the Lord pinched one of the Kapalas (Head) of Brahma, He is known here as Kapaliswarar. Another legend is that once Goddess Parvati was slightly inattentive while listening to Gnanopadesa from Lord Siva because she had her eyes on a dancing peacock. So, the Lord cursed her to be born as a peacock. As Devi Parvati conducted penance in the form of a Mayil (Pea-hen) and worshipped the Lord here, the place came to be called Mylapore. The story of Poompavai, who lost her life due to a snake-bite and her bones after cremation kept in an urn were given life by Gnanasambandar, is very famous here.

5. PALVANNANATHAR TEMPLE (TIRUVANMIYUR)

This temple is situated about 6 Km from Mylapore. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Palvannanathar and the Godess,Sundaranayaki. As Agastya did penance here and obtained from the Lord all the knowledge of the mooligas (medicinal herbs), the Lord is also known as Marunthiswarar. The tirth is known as Papanasini Tirtham which is believed to have been caused by the Devas and considered very sacred. It is said that Maharishi Valmiki worshipped the Lord here. Kamadhenu also worshipped the Lord here.The legend is that once Rishi Vasishtha was worshipping Lord Viswanatha at Kashi for a Mandalam (40 days) for which Kamadhenu was giving him milk for abhishekam. One day, attracted by the greenery of a hill-

side, she stayed there, forgetting to give milk to the sage. The outraged sage cursed Kamadhenu to wander as a wild cow. Wandering in so many places, she reached here and finding a Swayambhu Linga in a bush, she started pouring her milk on the Linga. One day King Sadayur saw her confronting a lion and sent an arrow in that direction The frightened cow immediately jumped out of the place. In that act, a hoof of the cow hit the Linga and the cow felt sad for it. However, Lord Siva was pleased with her devotion and relieved her of the curse. King Sadayur, appreciating all this, constructed this temple and worshipped the Lord here. Since the Linga was daily bathed with Kamadhenu's milk, the colour of the linga is white and hence the Lord came to be known as Palvannanathar (In Tamil 'Pal' means milk and 'vannar' means colour). The Lingamurti is in a slanting position, and the mark of Kamadhenu's hoof can be seen on it.

6. SIVA-VISHNU TEMPLE (TYAGARAJANAGAR)

This temple is situated about 10 km from Tiruvanmiyur. This is a very beautiful temple and worth seeing. It is said that Peyalwar, one of the 12 Alwars of the Vaishnava cult, was born here.

7. SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE (VADAPALANI)

This temple is situated about 3 km from Tyagarajanagar and considered equal to Palani. This place is situated north of Palani and hence it is called Vada Palani ('Vada' means 'north' in Tamil). The presiding deity is known as Subramanya Swamy.

8. MARIAMMAN TEMPLE (MANGADU)

This temple is about 23 kms on the Madras-Bangalore Trunk Road. The Goddess, Mariamman (also called

Kamakshi Amman), is seen here in a standing posture on the point of a needle, doing penance to regain her lost position from Her husband. It is believed that an unmarried girl, who worship the Goddess here continuously for seven weeks, get married.

9. TIRUVERKATTISWARAR TEMPLE (TIRUVERKADU)

This temple is about 5 km from Mangadu. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Tiruverkattiswarar and His consort, Tiruverkattammai. This place is also known as Vada Vedaranyam. Moorga Nayanar was born here. The tirth is known as Velayudha Tirtham.

10. KARUMARIAMMAN TEMPLE

This famous temple is situated very near to Tiruverkattiswarar Temple. The presiding deity known as Goddess Karumari Amman is very powerful. Puja is also performed for Sri Chakra installed by Adi Sankara Problems are believed to be solved and mental peace attained by worshipping the Goddess here. One could offer a variety of pujas in this temple. The temple is kept open continuously from 4.30 A.M. to 10 P.M. on weekdays and from 3 A.M. to 12 midnight on Sundays.

11. TIRUVALITHAYA NATHAR TEMPLE (PADI)

This temple is situated about 12 kms from Madras on way to Tirumullaivayil. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Tiruvalithaya Nathar and the Goddess, Thayammai. It is said that Hanuman and Devaguru Brihaspati worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Hanuman Tirtham.

62. TIRUMULLAIVAYIL

19 Km from Madras via Padi on way to Tiruvallur.

MASILAMANISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Masilamaniswarar and the Goddess, Kodi-idai-Nayaki. The Vimanam over the sanctum is in a semi-circular form and, as it is looking like an elephant lying, it is called Gaja Prishta Vimanam. The tirth is known as Chakra Tirtham. The legend is that King Tondaiman, being attracted by Erukku woods possessed by his enemies, waged a war with them. During the war he happened to hit a Siva Linga with his sword and was repenting for the same. Lord Siva appeared and consoled him. The Lord also sent Nandi to help him to secure the sacred Erukku woods. As the king won the battle with the help of Nandi, he got the Erukku woods and, using them for Pillars, built this temple. Since the Linga was wounded by the king's sword, it is always covered by sandal paste and abhishekam is performed to the peetham only. The Nandi, instead of facing Lord,is facing the other side towards the battle field. This temple is more famous for here Sundaramurti Nayanar getting back his eye-sight, which he lost in Tiruvotriyur as he broke his promise to his wife, Sangili Nachiyar. In this temple Vinayaka has got five heads and ten hands. Hence He is known as Panchamukha Vinayaka.

63. TIRUVALLUR

28 Km from Tirumullaivayil.

TIRTHISWARAR TEMPLE

This is a very big temple situated near the famous Veeraraghava Perumal temple. The Lord glorifying this

temple is known as Tirthiswarar and the Goddess, Tripurasundari.

64. TIRUPACHUR

4 Km from Tiruvallur.

PACHURANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Pachuranathar and the Goddess, Pashupathinayaki. The tirth is known as Chola Tirtham. It is said that Vyasa Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. Chola King is also said to have worshipped the Lord here and the Lord gave darshan to him as a snake charmer (Pambatti) under the bamboo tree.

65. TIRUVALANGADU

14 km from Tirupachur.

OORDHVA TANDAVAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Pancha Sabhas for Lord Nataraja, and known as Ratna Sabha.The Lord dwelling in this temple is Known as Oordhvatandavar and the Goddess, Vandarkuzhali. There was a Tandava contest between the Lord and the Goddess, Kali. During the Tandava, the Lord raised His right leg vertically above His head which the Goddess could not do.Hence the Lord here is known as Oordhvatandavar. It is said that Indra and Adisesha worshipped the Lord here. The murti of Karaikkal Ammayar is at the feet of Lord Nataraja, singing hymns in His praise. It is very interesting to note that She came to worship the Lord here by 'walking' on her head. Vinayaka here is with His two consorts, Riddhi and Siddhi. The tirth is known as Mukti Tirtham.

66. KOOVAM

30 km from Tiruvalangadu via Tirupachur.

TRIPURANTAKAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is Known as Tripurantakar and the Goddess, Tripurantaki. It is said that Sakti Devi and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Koopagni Tirtham.

67. ELLAMANGAIKOTTUR

8 km from Koovam via Narasingapuram.

CHANDRASEKARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Chandrasekarar and the Goddess, Kodenthumulaiyal. It is said that Chandra (Moon) worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Chandrasekarar. The tirth is known as Chandra Tirtham.

68. TAKKOLAM

11 km from Ellamangaikottur via Narasingapuram on way to Kancheepuram.

JALANATHISWARAR TEMPLE

The presiding deity is known as Jalanathiswarar and the Goddess, Girija Kannika. It is said that Goddess Uma, Indra, Yama, Surya, Chandra and Samvardha Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Parvati Tirtham.

69. TIRUMALPUR

18 km from Takkolam on way to Kancheepuram.

MALVANANGUNATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Malvanangunathar and the Goddess, Anjanakshi or Karunainayaki. The Linga is always covered with a Kavacha and pujas and abishekams are performed over the kavacha. It is said that Mahavishnu worshipped the Lord here and got back his lost Sudarshana Chakra. Hence the image of Mahavishnu is also here before the Lord. The tirth is known as Hari Tirtham.

70. TIRUTTANI

33 km from Tirumalpur via Arakkonam.

SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE

This majestic temple is built on a hill. There are 365 steps to go to the sanctum. There is also a good ghat road to reach the temple. This is one of the Aaru Padai Veedu (Six Celestial Abodes of Lord Subramanya). The presiding deity is known as Subramanya Swamy. After destroying the mighty Rakshasa Soorapadman, Lord Subramanya rested here for soothing (thani) his wrath, hence this place came to be known as Tiruttani. Lord Subramanya performed various leelas here. He also married Valli, who was a daughter of a hunter. The tirth is known as Saravana Poikai located at the foot of the hill.

71. TIRUVALLAM

63 km from Tiruttani via Sholingur and Ranipet.

VALLANATHAR TEMPLE

The temple is situated on the bank of Ponnai river. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vallanathár and the Goddess, Vallambikai. The sannidhi is facing west and the Nandi is facing east. It is said that the Navagrahas worshipped the Lord here. It is believed that Janaka Maharaja also worshipped the Lord here and the Lord gave him darshan. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

72. TIRUVETTIPURAM

54 km from Tiruvallam on way to Vandavasi.

VEDANATHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vedanatheswarar and the Goddess, Ilamulainayaki. There is also a sannidhi for Adikeshava Perumal. It is said that the four Vedas worshipped the Lord here. This temple is also famous because Tirugnanasambandar performed a miracle by converting a male palmyra tree into a female one yielding fruits which can be seen even today.

73. TIRUPANANGADU

22 km from Tiruvettipuram

TALAPURISWARAR TEMPLE

There are two sannidhis in this temple. In one the Lord is Talapuriswarar with Devi Amritavalli, said to

have been worshipped by Sage Agastya. In the other the Lord is Kripanatheswarar with Devi Kripanayaki, said to have been worhshipped by Sage Pulastya.

74. TIRUKURANGANIL MUTTAM

8 km from Tirupanangadu Via Dhusi.

VALISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Valiswarar and the Goddess, Irayar Valayammai. It is said that a Kurangu (Monkey), an Anil (Squirrel) and a Muttam (Crow), worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Vali Tirtham.

75. KANCHEEPURAM

9 km from Tirukuranganil Muttam. This is one of the Seven Mokshapuris (Sacred cities). The Siva temples are situated in Siva Kanchi while the Vishnu temples are in Vishnu Kanchi. There are fourteen important Siva temples.

1. KACHAPESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated very near the bus stand. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kachapeswarar. It is said that Mahavishnu, Brahma and Saraswati worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Ishtasiddhi Tirtham. According to the legend, once all Devas decided to churn the ocean to get Amrit by drinking which they would attain immortality. The Asuras also joined them on the understanding that they would have an equal share of the Amrit. Mount Mandara was made the churning post and serpent Vasuki the rope. Lord Vishnu took the form of a tortoise (Kachapa) and bore the Mountain Mandara on His

back. While the churning was going on, Vasuki was unable to bear the pain and emitted a dreadful poison known as Alahala. Everyone was terrified. Lord Vishnu, who was in the form of Kachapa, could not also tolerate the poison and lost the balance which shook the world. He repented as being the cause of this, and worshipped Lord Siva here. Hence the Lord is known as Kachapeswarar.

2. KANCHI KAMAKOTI PEETHAM

This is situated very close to the Kachapeswarar Temple and considered as among the foremost of the Maths established by Adi Sankara to propagate the Vedantic Philosophy of Advaita. The ruling Mathadhipati is called Sankaracharya. People daily throng here to have the darshan of His Holiness and also the deity, Chandramouleeswara, to whom the Sankaracharya performs Pujas.

3. CHITRAGUPTASWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is situated very near to Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. The main deity, Chitraguptaswamy, the 'accountant' to Yama (God of Death), is seen with a palmleaf ledger book and a writing instrument in his hand. The legend is that once Lord Siva, with Devi Uma, was thinking that someone should be there to keep a record of the good and bad acts and deeds of every man and woman.He took a gold plate and made a drawing on it. Sakti Devi saw beautiful art in it and asked the Lord to give it life. The Lord gave life to the picture and named it Chitragupta. Chitragupta chose Kancheepuram to live in. Hence the place is also known as Satyavrata Kshetra. This is the only temple for Chitragupta. He is considered to be the deity controlling the Ketu Graha. Worshipping Him on a full moon day is beneficial.

4. KAMAKSHI TEMPLE

This temple is situated about half a kilometre from Chitraguptaswamy Temple. This place is also considered as one of the Saktipeethas. Devi Kamakshi, the ruling deity of this temple, is said to be the Sakti of all Saktis. A Srichakra is also installed in front of the Goddess. The Goddess is enshrined in a Mandapam which is called Gayatri Mandapam. It is said that the 24 pillars of the Mandapam represent the 24 aksharas of the sacred Gayatri Mantra and the four walls represent the four Vedas. Devi Kamakshi is also known as Kamakoti Kamakshī because she fulfills the desires of Her devotees by Her gracious eyes. The words 'Ka' and 'ma' refer to Saraswati and Lakshmi, her right and left eyes. Hence to the right and left of Devi Kamakshi are the Goddesses, Tapas Kamakshi and Anjana Kamakshi. There is a sannidhi for Adi Sankara which is also worshipped. It is said that by worshipping the Goddess here Devi Lakshmi got her beauty back which she lost due to a curse of Mahavishnu. Since Devi Kamakshi is enshrined here as the reigning Goddess of the town, there is no separate sannidhi for the Goddess at any of the Siva temples in Siva Kanchi.

5. KUMARAKOTTAM TEMPLE

This ancient temple is situated near the Kamakshi temple. The presiding deity is Lord Kumara. It is said that once all the Devas went to see Lord Siva in Kailas. On their way, seeing Kartikeya everyone saluted Him, but Brahma thought Him to be a child and did not pay attention. Kartikeya stopped him and asked him the meaning of the 'Pranava'. As Brahma could not tell the meaning properly, Lord Muruga imprisoned him and undertook the task of creation from Brahma. Hence, Kumara is seen here with a single face and four hands, a temporary form which He assumed at that time.

There is a sannidhi for Lord Siva as 'Somaskanda Murti'. A sannidhi for Kachiappa Sivachariar is also here, who got the divine grace of Lord Kumara and composed the sacred Skanda Puranam in Tamil.

6. EKAMBARESWARAR TEMPLE

This famous temple is situated about half a kilometre from Kumarakottam temple. This is one of the Pancha Bhoota Kshetras and represents Prithvi (Earth).and therefore known as Prithvi Kshetra The Lingamurti is made of sand and hence always covered with a Kavacha. The Lord is known as Ekambareswarar. The gopuram of the temple is 192 ft. in height with 9 storeys. There is a mango tree said to be more than 3000 years old and considered very sacred. The tree has four branches which are said to represent the four Vedas.The leaves of the branches are different from one another. The mango fruits of the four branches also differ in taste. There is a belief that if a childless woman eats a fruit of this tree she is blessed with a child. It is said that Devi Parvati worshipped Lord Siva under this mango tree. There is a separate sannidhi for Mahavishnu known as Nilathunda Perumal. The tirth is known as Kampa Tirtham. It is said that Sundaramurti Nayanar got his eyesight restored here. The Vedas also worshipped the Lord here. According to the legend, once Devi Parvati, for amusement, closed the eyes of Lord Siva by her hands by which the entire universe was plunged into dense darkness. Lord Siva opened His third eye and provided light to the universe. Though the Devi acted out of sport, even then Lord Siva asked her to do penance on the earth. As such, she came down here and was doing the penance. Lord Siva wanted to test her penance. He caused a flood by lifting the Ganga from His head. To save the sand

Linga she was worshipping from the flood, Devi clasped it to her chest. The Lord was pleased and directed her that she should go to Tiruvannamalai to do penance there also. Near the Dwajastambham there is a sannidhi for Lord Mayananathar.

7. ONAKANTHISWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated near the Power House. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Onakanthiswarar. It is said Onan and Kanthan, two asuras, worshipped the Lord here and hence the Lord is known as Onakanthiswarar. It is said the Devas also worshipped the Lord here. Sundarar sang in praise of the Lord and got gold by His grace. The tirth is known as Vishnu Tirtham.

8. KAILASANATHAR TEMPLE

This ancient and famous temple is situated about 1.5 km from the bus stand. The Lord is known as Kailasanathar. The Lingamurti is 8 ft. in height with 16 facial bands. There are 58 small mandapams encircling and facing the Lord. The architectural and sculptural beauty is worth seeing. An interesting legend connected with this temple is that the king wanted to perform Kumbhabhishekam to this temple on a particular day. But, in his dream, the Lord told him that He would go first to Tinnanoor where the saint, Poosala Nayanar, was performing Kumbhabhishekam on that day. The king desired to witness the Kumbhabhishekam, so he went there but could not find any temple, instead he found Poosalar in penance under a tree. The king narrated the dream to Poosalar. Moved by the love bestowed on him by the Lord, Poosala Nayanar told the king that he had built a

temple in his heart and was performing Kumbhabhishekam for it. Then the king built a temple at Tinnanoor and thereafter he performed Kumbhabhishekam of the Kailasanathar Temple.

9. ANEKA-THANKA-PATHESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is very close to the Kailasanathar Temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Aneka-thanka-patheswarar (Kavathanathar). It is said that Vinayaka and Kubera worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Thanu Tirtham.

10. AGASTISWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated east of the Kailasanathar Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Agastiswarar. At the time of the Siva-Parvati wedding, Sage Agastya was directed by Lord Siva to proceed to the south. Agastya felt reluctant to be away at this time, as he was looking forward to having the darshan of Siva and Parvati in their wedding scene. On assurance of a special darshan to him later on, Agastya came to this place at Kancheepuram. He installed this Linga and worshipped the Lord here. It is said that Sri Rama and Lakshmana visited this place while on their way in search of Sita. Sri Rama worshipped the Lord here and got Pashupatastram from Him. Sri Rama is said to have again visited this place while on way back from Lanka and worshipped the Lord here to expiate for his sin of having killed Ravana. The tirth is Known as Sarva Tirtham.

11. TIRU-METRALI-NATHAR TEMPLE

This temple is located at Pillaiyarpalayam in Western

Kanchi. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Tirumetralinathar and the Goddess, Tirumetralinayaki. There is also a sannidhi for Gnanasambandar. It is said that Mahavishnu worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Vishnu Tirtham.

12. PUNYAKOTISWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is located at Vishnu Kanchi in Yanai Katti Street. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Punyakotiswarar and the Goddess, Punyakotiswari. The tirth is known as Koti Tirtham.

13. SATYAVRATESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated very near to the Government Hospital. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Satyavrateswarar (Karaithirunathar) and the Goddess, Karaikuzhaliamman. The tirth is known as Indra Tirtham. The Sthalapurana says that Sivi (Indra), disgusted with the pleasures of the Devalokas, wanted mukti (liberation) and sought the help of Devaguru Brihaspati, to tell him the ways of attaining mukti. Brihaspati advised him to go to Kanchi and worship Lord Satyavrateswarar. He further told him that if any bhakta took bath in the temple-tank once and worshipped Lord Satyavrateswarar he would become Indra and if he took two baths he would become Brahma, and if he took three baths he would get mukti or moksha. But if he took a bath on Wednesday and worshipped the Lord there, it was sure to bring mukti. Accordingly, Sivi took bath on a Wednesday and the Lord appeared before him and gave him liberation. It is said that Budha (Mercury) also worshipped the Lord here.

14. MUKTISWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated in Gandhi Road. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Muktiswarar. The story is that Tirukurippu Thondar voluntarily washed the clothes of the devotees of Lord Siva who came on pilgrimage to Kancheepuram. Once, during winter, he met an aged devotee in dirty and tattered clothes and requested him for the washing of his clothes. The aged man hesitated as he had no spare clothes, but finally agreed provided that the clothes were returned to him duly washed before sunset. Thondar agreed and went to the tank to wash them. A while later, the sky was overcast and a heavy rain followed which drenched the clothes and sunset was also nearing. Tirukurippu Thondar trembled in the mind at the thought of committing the sin of breach of promise to the aged devotee. He decided to commit suicide by striking his head against the granite stone he used for washing the clothes. At that moment, Lord Siva appeared before him and revealed that the aged devotee was none other than Himself. Lord Siva praised the noble qualities of Tirukurippu Thondar and assured him of Mukti at the end of his life. The Lingamurti consecrated in the temple came to be called Muktiswarar and Tirukurippu Thondar as Tirukurippu Thondanayanar.

76. MAGARAL

16 Km from Kancheepuram on way to Uttiramerur.

ADAIKALAMKATHANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Adaikalamkathanathar and the Goddess, Bhuvananayaki. It is said that worship of the Lord on Monday fulfils one's wishes. Angapradakshina is also done in the temple for the

blessing of a child. It is believed that Indra worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Agni Tirtham.

77. TIRUKACHUR

50 Km from Magaral via Uttiramerur, Chengalpattu and Singaperumalkovil.

VIRUNDITTANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Virundittanathar and the Goddess, Anjanakshi. The Lingamurti is very small. It is said that Mahavishnu in the form of a Tortoise (Kachhapa) worshipped the Lord here, therefore the Lord is also known as Kachhapeswarar. The tirth is known as Amutha Tirtham. It is also said that food was served by the Lord to Sundaramurti who arrived here with fatigue and hunger on a hot mid-day. The Lord went round the town in disguise as a mendicant and fetched food for the devotee and fed him.

To the west of this temple is a small hillock known as Aushadagiri with a Siva temple at the top dedicated to Aushadeeswarar. Ailments of all kinds are believed to be cured by worshipping the Lord here.

78. TIRUVIDAICHURAM

20 Km from Tirukachur via Chengalpattu on way to Tirupporur.

IDAICHURANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Idaichuranathar with Devi Imayambikai. It is said that Gnanasambandar was proceeding from Kanchi to

Pakshitirtham and did not see this temple which was on his way. The Lord gave a voice as to why Sambandar was passing without worshipping Him and on hearing the voice Gnanasambandar returned and worshipped the Lord here. The camphor lit on the Ahuti is reflected on the Lingamurti to signify that the Lord appeared before Gnanasambandar in Jyoti Swaroop. Maharishi Gautama and Sanatkumaras also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Indra Tirtham.

79. TIRUPPORUR

17 Km from Tiruvidaichuram. There are two temples.

1. SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE

The presiding deity is known as Subramanyaswamy with His two consorts Valli and Deivayanai. On the eastern side of the sanctum, one can see a Palmyra tree and an ant-hill. Under the ant-hill, the Swayambhu Murti of Lord Muruga with Valli and Deivayanai is seen on a small peetham. It is said that Chidambara Swamigal used to perform abhishekam to this murti. But now the murti is covered by a Kavacha and no abhishekam is done. It is said that here, Lord Muruga told the meaning of Pranava to Agastya Muni. The dwajastambham is found here in front of the Rajagopuram, while, usually, it is seen after entering the Rajagopuram.

2. KAILASANATHAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated on a hill known as Pranavamalai very near to Subramanyaswamy Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kailasanathar and the Goddess, Balambikai. It is said that Mahavishnu and Lakshmi were subjected to a curse of Kanva Maharishi. They

worshipped the Lord here and got liberated from the curse. There is a temple for Vinayaka while going up the hill.

80. MAHABALIPURAM

20 Km from Tirupporur.

SIVA TEMPLE

This Siva temple is located near the seashore. There are numerous caves and huge stone rathas nearby which are worth seeing. There were many temples existing here in the past but, due to constant erosion of land by the sea, most of them were submerged.

81. TIRUKKALUKUNRAM

14 Km from Mahabalipuram on way to Chengalpattu. There are two important temples.

1. VEDAGIRISWARAR TEMPLE

The temple is located on a hill called Vedagiri. There are 530 steps to reach the sanctum. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vedagiriswarar and the Goddess, Chokkanayaki. The hill itself is considered to be holy because, as can be seen by the name, it represents the four Vedas. It is said that, long back, the Vedas were only one and, later on, it was divided into four. As the Vedas did not like the division, they prayed to the Lord that they should be united. So, Lord Siva directed them to take the form of a mountain and rest at Tirukkalukunram and He shall show the light to the world which is immersed in Agnana. It is also said that once Mahavishnu visited Lord Siva at Mount Kailas

leaving his vahan Garuda to the care of Nandi. Garuda spoke lowering the strength of Lord Siva. Nandi got furious and would not tolerate the insult of his master. As Garuda could not stand the breath of Nandi in anger, he cried for help. Mahavishnu came to the rescue and asked Siva to cool down Nandi. Lord Siva advised Nandi to keep peace and said that wisdom should not give way to anger. Repentant Nandi desired to do penance to get rid of the sin and Lord Siva directed him to go to Tirukkalukunram. To test Nandi's penance, the Lord sent Indra to disturb him. But, unperturbed, Nandi continued his penance. Lord Siva, pleased, asked Nandi for a boon. Nandi said that he wanted no boon for himself, but that even the worst sinners be relieved of their sins if they worshipped the Lord here. The prayer was granted by the Lord. Hence this place is considered very sacred. According to the legend, there were two rishis, Athi and Sambhu. Athi was devoted to Lord Siva and Sambhu to Sakti. They lived a saintly life, offering pujas to their respective deities. But each of them thought that his deity was superior to the other's. They had a quarrel over that. Lord Siva appeared and told them that Siva and Sakti were equal and co-ordination between them was needed for creation and continuance of the universe. Hence there was no question of superiority or inferiority. But they were not satisfied. Then Lord Siva cursed them to become vultures. It is believed that these Pakshis visit here to get rid of their sins. Hence this place is also known as 'Pakshitirtham'. It is still a mystery how they come exactly at 12 Noon every day for taking the sweet rice from the hand of the priest. It is also said that they take bath at Kashi, visit Rameswaram for prayer, then take their food at Tirukkalukunram and rest at Chidambaram.

2. MOOVAR KOVIL

At the foot of the hill, there are separate sannidhis for Saints Appar. Sundarar and Gnanasambandar. Hence it is known as Moovar Kovil 'Temple of the Three'. It is said that these three nayanmars did not want to defile the holy hill by setting their feet on it, so they preferred to worship the Lord from the foot of the hill. There is also a temple dedicated to Lord Siva known as Bhaktavasala and the goddess Tripurasundari. The tirth is known as Sanku (Conch) Tirtham. It is also said that, till the last century, once in 12 years, a conch used to appear from this tank with bubble and loud sound. It seems that now it is non-existant.

82. MELAMARUVATHUR

48 Km from Tirukkalukunram via Chengalpattu and Madurantakam.

ADI PARASAKTI TEMPLE

The Goddess adorning this temple is known as Adi Parasakti and considered to be very powerful. Special pujas are offered on Sundays. During special functions, devotees wear red clothes and worship the Goddess by doing angapradakshina (going around the temple lying flat on the ground) and get their prarthanas fulfilled.

83. ACHCHARAPAKKAM

4 Km from Melamaruvathur.

BHAGRAPURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Bhagrapuriswarar and the Goddess, Adisundaranayaki. The

tirth is known as Bhanu Tirtham. According to the legend, there were three big rakshasas known as Tripuras. They had received boons of enormous powers and then started giving terrible troubles to all the Devas. The Devas approached Lord Siva to kill the asuras. They built a big chariot for Him for the purpose. But they failed to even think of Lord Vinayaka before making this chariot. The worship of Lord Vinayaka first, is a must before starting anything. To teach them a lesson, Lord Vinayaka loosend the axle (achhu) of the chariot wheel and as a result it broke (Iru) at this place. Hence the place is known as Achcharapakkam.

84. MAILAM

50 Km from Achcharapakkam via Tindivanam.

SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE

The presiding deity is known as Subramanyaswamy with His two consorts, Valli and Deivayanai. The peacock is facing north.

85. TIRUVAKKARAI

14 Km from Mailam via Perambakkam.

CHANDRASEKHARESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Chandrasekhareswarar and the Goddess, Vadivambikai. The Linga has three faces representing the three yugas already passed. It is said that Vakrasura and Chandra (Moon) worshipped the Lord here. There is a separate sannidhi for Vakra Kali which is very famous. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

86. OZHUNTHIYAPATTU

25 Km from Tiruvakkarai via Perambakkam and Vannur.

ARASILINATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Arasilinathar and the Goddess, Perianayaki. It is said that Vamadeva Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Arasili Tirtham.

87. IRUMBAI

10 Km from Ozhunthiyapattu on way to Pondicherry.

MAKALESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Makaleswarar and the Goddess Kuyilmozhinayaki. It is said that Maharshi Makalar worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Makala Tirtham.

88. PONDICHERRY

12 Km from Irumbai.

MANAKKULA VINAYAKAR TEMPLE

This temple is very near to the famous Aravinda Ashram. The presiding deity is Lord Vinayaka, known as Manakkula Vinayakar, and considered very powerful. Two Siva temples nearby for Kalathiswarar and Vedapuriswarar are also worth seeing.

89. VILLIANUR

9 Km from Pondicherry on way to Villupuram.

TIRUKAMESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Tirukameswarar and the Goddess, Kokilambikai. This is a Swayambhu Linga. The sacred car (rath) festival is held in the month of June every year which attracts thousands of piligrims. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

90. ANDAR KOIL

13 Km from Villianur on way to Villupuram.

VADUKOORNATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vadukoornathar and the Goddess, Vaduvakirkanni. The River Pennai is considered to be the tirtham here. It is said that Bhairava and Ugraveerya Rishi worshipped the Lord here.

91. PANAYAPURAM

25 Km from Andar Koil.

PANANKATTISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Panankattiswarar and the Goddess, Puravambal. It is said that Suryadeva worshipped the Lord here. During the first seven days of the Tamil month, 'Chithirai', the rays of the sun first fall on the Lord and then on the Goddess, in the sanctum. The tirth is known as Amrita Tirtham.

92. TIRUAMATTUR

17 Km from Panayapuram via Villupuram.

AZHAKUKATHALAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Azhakukathalar and the Goddess, Azhakammai. It is said that Kamadhenu, the divine cow, worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Pashu Tirtham.

93. TIRUVANNAMALAI

65 Km from Tiruamattur.

ARUNACHALESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the 'Pancha Bhoota Kshetras' and represents 'Fire' and therefore known as Agni Kshetra. It is also known as 'The Hill of the Holy Beacon'. This is one of the biggest temples in South India and very famous. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Arunachaleswarar and the Goddess, Unnamulai. This is the birth place of the famous Saint Arunagirinathar who composed the great Tiruppugazh songs. Ramana Maharishi, a universally acclaimed saint, also lived here. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham. Karthigai Deepam Day is celebrated as a big festival here and a huge oil lamp is lit up at the top of the hill which can be seen from miles around. Two puranic episodes are associated with this temple, one of Lingodbhava and the other of Ardhanariswara. In the first, Lord Siva established His supremacy. Vishnu and Brahma had a dispute over their superiority. When they were so fighting, Lord Siva appeared between them in the form of a towering column of fire and a voice from the sky ('asareeri') said that they should cease fighting and the matter could be

settled if they found out the lower and upper ends of this column. Thereafter both Vishnu and Brahma started out on their quest, assuming the forms of a boar and a swan respectively. Both of them were unsuccessful in their attempt to locate the ends of the endless Lord Siva. They returned and offered prayers to Lord Siva. Conceding to their prayer Lord Siva changed His form of a column of fire and became a 'sthavara' (steady linga) in the shape of the Arunachala Hill. Thus the Lingodbhava took place here. As the hill itself is considered to be a 'Jyotir Linga', the pilgrims do Giripradakshanam, i.e. go around the hill, by foot, a circumference of about 14 K.M. The other episode is that Goddess Parvati once playfully covered the eyes of Lord Siva by her hands by which the entire universe was plunged into dense darkness. With a view to pay the penalty for the sin, Goddess Parvati went to Kancheepuram where She made a Linga of earth and worshipped the Lord . The Lord told Her that She should also go to Tiruvannamalai and do penance. Thus she did penance here and united with the Lord. Hence the Lord is also known as Ardhanariswara.

94. TIRUKKOYILUR

34 Km from Tiruvannamalai. There are two important temples.

1. ARAYANI NATHAR TEMPLE (ARAKANDANALLUR)

This temple is situated on a hillock very near to Railway Station. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Arayaninathar and the Goddess, Arunayaki. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that Prachanda Rishi and the Pandavas worshipped the Lord here. The River Pennai is considered to be the tirtham here.

2. VIRATTESWARAR TEMPLE

The temple is situated about 2 Km from Arayaninathar Temple. This is one of the Ashta Veerattana Kshetras of Lord Siva. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Viratteswarar and the Goddess, Sivanandavalli. It is said that theSamhara of Andhakasura was done by the Lord here. The River Pennai is the tirtham here.

95. T. EDAIYARU

17 Km from Tirukkoyilur on way to Tiruvennainallur.

EDAIYARU NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Edaiyarunathar and the Goddess, Chitridainayaki. It is said that Sukhabrahma Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The River Pennai is the tirth here.

96. TIRUVENNAINALLUR

6 Km from T.Edaiyaru.

THADUTHATKONDESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Thaduthatkondeswarar and the Goddess, Verkanni. Meikanda Sivachariar was born here. It is said that Rishi Sambhupatta worshipped the Lord here. It is here that Lord Siva stopped the marriage of Sundaramurti and made him His ardent devotee. The River Pennai is considered to be the tirtham here.

97. GRAMAM

4 Km from Tiruvennainallur on way to Arasur.

MUNDEESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Mundeeswarar and the Goddess, Kanaarkuzhali. It is said that Brahma and Indra worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Kannayira Tirtham. The dance performed here by the Lord is known as Sundara Natanam.

98. NEIVENNAI

30 Km from Gramam via Tiruvennainallur and Pandur.

VENNAIAPPAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Vennaiappar and the Goddess, Neelamalarkanni. It is said that Sashika Rishi worshipped the Lord here.The River Pennai is the tirth here. This ancient temple is now in a dilapidated condition.

99. TIRUMANALLUR

26 Km from Neivennai via Ulundurpet on way to Panrutti.

NAVALESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Navaleswarar and the Goddess, Sundarambikai. There is a sannidhi for Varadaraja Perumal. This is the birth place of Sundaramurti Nayanar, hence there is a sannidhi for him also.

100. TIRUTHURAIYUR

20 Km from Tirumanallur via Panrutti.

THURAIYURNATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Thuraiyurnathar and the Goddess, Poongothainayaki. This is a Swayambhu Linga. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that Narada Muni worshipped the Lord here. The Lord gave darshan to Sundaramurti Nayanar here. Arulnandi Sivachariar attained moksha here. The River Pennai is the tirth here.

101. TIRUVADIGAI

7 Km from Panrutti on way to Tiruppapuliyur.

VEERATTANATHAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Ashta Veerattana kshetras of Lord Siva. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Veerattanathar and the Goddess, Athigainayaki. The Lord came on a chariot and killed the Tripuras by burning them here. Hence the garbagriha is in the style of a chariot. Appar was cured here of his severe stomach ailment by the Lord. It is said that Brahma, Vishnu and Garuda worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sula Gangai Tirtham.

102. TIRUMANIKUZHI

16 Km from Tiruvadigai on way to Tiruppapuliyur.

MANICKAVARADAR TEMPLE

The presiding deity, Lord Manickavaradar, is supposed to be with His consort, Manickavalli, in private and hence there is a curtain before the garbaghriha. On the

curtain, the picture of Bhimarudra is painted. Puja and deeparadhana are performed first to Bhimarudra and with his permission the curtain is raised for the public to have the darshan of the Lord. It is believed that Mahavishnu, during His Vamana Avatar worshipped Lord Siva here. The River Pennai is the tirth here.

103. TIRUPPAPULIYUR

9 Km from Tirumanikuzhi on way to Cuddalore.

THONDRATHUNAI NATHAR TEMPLE

This is an ancient and a very big temple. The Lorc adorning this temple is known as Thondrathunainathar anc the Goddess, Thokainayaki. It is believed that Rish Vyaghrapada worshipped the Lord here and hence the place came to be known as Puliyur (Vyaghra (Tiger) means Pul in Tamil). Appar was thrown into the sea by the Pallava King for refusing to sing in his praise. Instead of drowning, Appar reached this place safely from the sea chanting the name of the Lord. The River Pennai is the tirth here.

104. TIRUCHOPURAM

24 Km from Tiruppapuliyur via Cuddalore and Alappakkam.

CHOPURANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Chopuranathar and the Goddess, Chopuranayaki. It is said that Agastya Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. This temple was under the sand and discovered 125 years back by two Tambirans and hence it is also known as Tambiran Kanda (discovered) Sthalam. The tirth is known as Parama Tirtham.

105. THEERTHA NAGARI

12 Km from Tiruchopuram via Alappakkam.

TIRUNTHISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Tirunthiswarar and the Devi, Ilamkombannal. The Lord is said to have helped a harijan to cultivate thinai (millet) and therefore this place is also called Tiruthinainagar. The tirth is known as Manimutharu Tirtham.

106. VRIDHACHALAM

59 Km from Theerthanagari via Kulanchawdi.

PAZHAMALAI NATHAR TEMPLE

This is an ancient and a very big temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Pazhamalainathar and the Goddess, Perianayaki. Besides the Lingamurti, there are idols of seven Kalis and 21 Rishis. It is said that Brahma and Ashtavasus worshipped the Lord here. It is also said that the Lord gave darshan to Mahavishnu as a Brahmin. The tirth is known as Manimutharu Tirtham. Like Mani Karnika ghat in Varanasi, the Manimutharu ghat is also very sacred for immersion of ashes as part of the last rites which are performed for the departed soul. Vinayaka's temple is situated 25 feet below the ground level and hence he is called 'Patala Vinayaka'.

107. PENNAGADAM

19 Km from Vridhachalam.

CHUDARKOZHUNDHU NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as

Chudarkozhundhu Nathar and the Devi, Kadanthainayaki. The Vimana over the sanctum is in Gaja Urishta style and the Moolasthanam has got three windows on three sides. It is believed that this Swayambhu Linga was protected by the celestial elephant, Irawata, which stood covering the Lord and hence the moolasthanam is in the same form. It is said that Rambha, Kamadhenu and Irawata worshipped the Lord here. This is the birth place of Kalikamba Nayanar. The River Ketila is the tirth here.

108. TIRUVATTATHURAI

7 Km from Pennagadam on way to Titagudi.

ARATHURAI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Arathurainathar and His consort, Anandanayaki. It is said that Sapta Rishis and Indra worshipped the Lord here. It is also said that Lord Siva sent an umbrella and a palanquin to Sambandar, who came on foot. The carvings of Ashtalakshmis are worth seeing. The River Ketila is the tirth here.

109. RAJENDRAPATTINAM

25 Km from Tiruvattathurai via Pennagadam.

NEELAKANTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Neelakantheswarar and the Goddess, Neelamalarkanni. It is said that Nagaraja worshipped the Lord here. This is the birth place of Tiruneelakantha Nayanar. The River Manimutharu is the tirth here.

110. KOODALAIYATTUR

19 Km from Rajendrapattinam via Srimushnam and Achala.

NERIKATTRU NAYAKESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Nerikattrunayakeswarar and His consort, Purikuzhalainayaki. It is said that Valmiki Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. It is also said that the Lord misgúided Sundaramurti Nayanar in his paths who was proceeding to Vridhachalam, to make him sing on Him in this temple. The River Manimutharu is the tirth here.

111. GANGAIKONDACHOLAPURAM

26 Km from Koodalaiyattur.

GANGAIKONDACHOLESWARAR TEMPLE

This big and famous temple is built by Rajendra Chola-I, son of Raja Raja Chola who constructed the famous Thanjavur temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Gangaikondacholeswarar and the Goddess, Brahmanayaki. The murtis of Saraswati, Lakshmi and Chandesanugraha (a devotee of Siva) are very famous here. The Navagrahas are on a chariot with seven horses. Durga is also seen with 20 hands in the posture of killing the demon, Mahishasura. There is a huge Nandi carved out of a single block of stone.

112. TIRUKKADAMBUR

25 Km from Gangaikondacholapuram via Mannargudi towards Omampuliyur.

AMRITA GHATESWARAR TEMPLE (KHARAKKOIL)

The Moolasthanam of this temple is in the form of a chariot with wheels and horses. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Amrita Ghateswarar and the Goddess, Jyotiminnammai. Here Vinayaka is known as Aaravara Ganapati. It is said that Indra worshipped the Lord here and got Amritam. The tirth is known as Amrita Tirtham.

113. OMAMPULIYUR

4 Km from Tirukkadambur.

TUYARTEERTHA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Tuyarteerthanathar and the Goddess, Poonkodinayaki. It is said that at this place, Devi obtained Mantropadesa from Lord Siva in Dakshinamurti swaroop. Hence there is a unique Sabha for Dakshinamurti. The tirth is known as Siva Tirtham.

114. KANATTAMPULIYUR

9 Km from Omampuliyur.

PATANJALI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Patanjalinathar and the Goddess, Kanarkuzhali. It is said that Patanjali Maharishi worshipped the Lord here and hence the Lord is called Patanjalinathar. The tirth is known as Siva Pushkarini.

115. TIRUNARAIYUR

12 Km from Kanattampuliyur.

SOUNDARESWAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Soundareswar and the Goddess, Tripurasundari. It is said that a Gandharva was born as Narai (Crane) due to a curse of Durvasa Maharishi and he worshipped the Lord here. Hence the place is called Tirunaraiyur. There is a sannidhi for Vinayaka which is very famous. It is said that Vinayaka took prasadam from the hand of Nambi Andar, the priest's son. The tirth is known as Karunya Tirtham.

116. CHIDAMBARAM

18 Km from Tirunaraiyur. There are five important temples.

1. NATARAJA TEMPLE

This is one of the Pancha Bhoota Kshetras and represents 'sky' and therefore known as Akasha kshetra. The temple is very famous and one of the biggest in South India. The place is also known as Bhookailas. This is also one of the five famous Natana Sabhas for Lord Siva known as Kanaka Sabha. The Lord here is known as Nataraja, which means king among the dancers. He is a Cosmic dancer and the dance He performed here is known as Ananda Tandavam. The Lord is also known here as Sabhanayakar and the Goddess, Sivakammiammai. The main Gopuram of this temple has got nine storeys and its outer walls bear miniature statues depicting the entire Natya Karnas consisting of 108 forms of dances. The whole art work is very captivating and one could call it as poems carved on stone. The murti of Lord Nataraja is made of pure gold and kept open for darshan for six specified periods of a day. On the right side of Lord Nataraja's sanctum is located the

famous Chidambara Rahasya. It is a garland of golden vilva leaves. As soon as the deeparadhana is performed for the main deity, deeparadhana is also performed for the Chidambara Rahasya where devotees throng in hundreds to witness the same. The major worship is when the abhishekam is performed to a spatika Linga at the Kanaka Sabha. Abhishekam is also performed to Ratna Sabhapati, a Ruby form of Lord Nataraja, which takes place daily at 10.00 a.m. There are separate sannidhis for Lord Tirumoolanathar and Goddess Umayammai. It is said that, among others, Vyasa, Suga and Sounaka Rishis worshipped the Lord here. There is also a sannidhi for Govindaraja Perumal. There is an idol of Mukkuruni Vinayaka which is considered to be the biggest in India. There is a fascinating puranic legend about Chidambaram that the Rishis of Darukavanam were very arrogant due to their tapasyas and learning. Lord Siva wanted to teach them a lesson. He took the form of Bhikshadanar and Lord Vishnu took the form of Mohini and both came to Darukavanam. The wives of the Rishis were very much fascinated by the beauty of the divine couple which enraged the Rishis. From a sacrificial fire, they sent a Tiger to kill them. But Lord Siva killed the Tiger and wore its skin. The Rishis then sent a poisonous serpent. Siva tied it round His neck. Then again the Rishis sent Muyalaka, a mighty asura. The Lord crushed the asura under His feet. Then the Rishis realised and repented for their follies and begged pardon before the Lord. Then Lord Siva, assuming the form of Nataraja, performed various dances before the Rishis and the Devas. On hearing about this dance from Lord Vishnu, Adisesha also desired to witness the same and prayed to Lord Siva for it. The Lord advised him to go to Chidambaram where he could witness the dance. Then Adisesha was reborn as Patanjali and went to the forest of Chidambaram where, along with Rishi Vyaghrapada, he

worshiped the Lord and prayed for the dance. Lord Nataraja agreed to perform the dance for his devotees but Bhadrakali, the presiding deity of the village, would not allow the Lord to dance. Then a competition in dance was held between the Lord and Bhadrakali. Lord Siva defeated Bhadrakali and, since then, He is dwelling in this place.

2. TILLAI KALIAMMAN TEMPLE

This temple is situated about 2.5 Km from Nataraja Temple. The main deity of this temple is Goddess Kali known as Tillaikaliamman. The legend says that this temple was built for the Goddess who came to reside here after Her defeat.

3. PASHUPATESWARAR TEMPLE (TIRUVETKALAM)

This temple is located about 5 Km from Tillaikaliamman Temple and close to the Annamalai University. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Pashupateswarar and the Goddess, Nallanayaki. It is believed that Arjuna worshipped the Lord here and received Pashupatastra from Him. It is said that Narada Muni also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Narada Tirtham.

4. UCHINATHESWARAR TEMPLE (SIVAPURI)

This is situated about 2 Km from Tiruvetkalam. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Uchinatheswarar and the Goddess, Kanakambikai. It is said that Kanva Maharishi worshipped the Lord here.

5. PALVANNANATHAR TEMPLE (KARAIMEDU)

This is situated very close to Uchinatheswarar temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Palvannanathar and the Goddess, Vedanayaki. The original temple was submerged in Kollidam River. Therefore this temple was constructed. The River Kollidam is the tirth here.

117. ACHALPURAM

13 Km from Chidambaram via Kollidam.

SIVALOKA TYAGESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Sivalokatyageswarar and the Goddess, Umayammai. The tirth is known as Panchakshara Tirtham. It is said that Tirugnana Sambandar came here in his wedding dress with his wife. It is also said that Rishis Bhrigu, Atri, Kakabhusand and Agastya worshipped the Lord here.

118. TIRU MAHENDRA PALLI

7 Km from Achalpuram.

TIRUMENIYALAGAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Tirumeniyalagar and the Goddess, Vadivambikai. The tirth is known as Mandara Pushkarini. It is said that once in this temple, a rat tried to feed on the ghee in the lamp. At that time, the light being emitted by the lamp was dim but, by the act of the rat, it became bright as the 'thiri' (wick) was rekindled. Pleased with the act, the Lord gave a boon to the rat to become Mahabali Chakravarti in its next birth.

119. SIRKALI

24 Km from Tirumahendrapalli via Achalpuram and Kollidam. There are two important temples.

1. BRAHMAPURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Brahmapuriswarar and the Goddess, Tirunilainayaki. Lord Siva is generally worshipped in three forms. i.e. Guru, Linga and Sangama. Here, all the three forms are seen. Umamaheswarar or Thoniappar is regarded as Guru form. Brahmapuriswarar is the Linga form and Sattanathaswamy is Sangama form. It is believed Sangama form is one of the eight aspects of Bhairava. On Fridays, at midnight, a special puja is performed for Lord Sattanathaswamy. A coat of vivet (Punugu) is laid on the Murti during this puja. The Vimana over the sanctum is looking like a boat. Kali worshipped the Lord here and therefore the place is known as Sirkali. This is the place where Gnanasambandar was born and fed by Goddess Parvati with Divine Milk due to which at the age of 3 years he became a great saint. Tirugnana Sambandar composed 640 verses on Lord Siva. In the outer prakara there is a separate sannidhi for him. It is worth mentioning here that Adi Sankara in his 'Soundarya Lahiri', praised Gnanasambandar calling him Dravida Shishu who received the grace of the Mother Sakti. It is said that Vishnu, Brahma, Brihaspati, Indra, Surya, Chandra and Rahu worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Chakra Tirtham.

2. SAPTAPURISWARAR TEMPLE (TIRUKKOLAKKA)

This temple is situated about 1 Km from Brahmapuriswarar temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Saptapuriswarar and the Goddess, Osaikoduthanayaki. It is said that Gnanasambandar got a

pair of Jalra (Manjira) from the Lord here. The tirth is known as Anantha Tirtham.

120. TIRUKKURUGAVOOR

7 Km from Sirkali on way to Tirumullaivayil.

VELLANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vellanathar and the Goddess, Kaviyamkanni. In the Tamil month Thai (January - February), during the Amavasya day, the Lord's idol is brought to the tirth for Tirumanjanam and the colour of the water at that time changes to white as milk which can be very well observed. Therefore the tirth is known as 'Pal Kinaru' (Well of Milk). It is said that Gnanasambandar received Kattamudhu(Packet of food) and water from Lord Siva here.

121. TIRUMULLAI VAYIL

8 Km from Tirukkurugavoor

MULLAIVANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mullaivananathar and the Goddess, Kothaiammai. It is said that Mahalakshmi and Indra worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Chakra Tirtham.

122. ANNAPPANPETTAI

23 Km from Tirumullaivayil via Sirkali towards Tiruvenkadu.

SUNDARESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple, is known as Sundareswarar and the Goddess, Alagammai. It is said that Maharishi Parasara worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Ambuvi Tirtham.

123. TIRUVENKADU

6 Km from Annappanpettai

SWETARANYESWARAR TEMPLE

This is a very big and famous temple. This is one of the six kshetras considered equal to Kashi It is also known as Adi Chidambaram or Swetaranyam. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Swetaranyeswarar and the Goddess, Brahmavidyanayaki. There is a sannidhi for Aghoramurti. Darshan of this murti on Sunday night is considered important. There is also a sannidhi for Goddess Kali. The Navagrahas are installed in a row facing the Lord. The sannidhi of Nataraja is very famous. The Nandi installed here is unique. Its ears are turned towards the Devi and its face turned towards the Lord signifying his role as a communicator between the devine couple. There are three tirthas known as Agni, Surya and Chandra tirthams. A dip in all the three tirthams is considered purificatory and wish-fulfilling. Brahma, Subramanya, Indra, Agni, Surya, Vyaghrapada, Irawatam and others have worshipped the Lord here. There is a legendary story that Swetaketu, son of Sage Uddalaka, was destined to die when he completed eight years of age and therefore he intensely worshipped the Lord here to overcome death. Yama (God of Death) came for performing his duty. The disrespectful manner of his trying to take the life of His bhakta annoyed the Lord. He emerged from the Linga and punished Yama. There is also another legendary

story that Marutwasura, son of Jalandarasura, was a fiercely powerful demon and tormenting the Devas. Lord Siva deputed Nandi to destroy Marutwasura. Nandi threw the asura in the ocean. Marutwasura re-appeared and by severe penance obtained a shoolam (Trishul) from Lord Siva and attacked Nandi again. Nandi, unable to face the divine weapon, fled to the Lord but not without loss of his tail and horns in the fight. The Lord then, in a rage, took aghoraroopam and did the samhara of the demon and saved the Devas. Hence Nandi's murti installed in the temple is without its tail and horns.

124. TIRUKATTUPALLI

1.5 Km from Tiruvenkadu.

ARANYA SUNDARESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Aranya Sundareswarar and the Goddess, Akhilandanayaki. The sannidhi is facing west. It is believed that Maharishi Aranya worshipped the Lord here and therefore the Lord is known as Aranyasundareswarar. It is said that all the Devas also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Amrita Poikai.

125. TIRUCHAIKADU

4.5 Km from Tirukattupalli via Tiruvenkadu.

CHAYAVANESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the six kshetras considered equal to Kashi. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Chayavaneswarar and the Goddess, Kuyilinumnan-mozhiyal. The Lord gave darshan to Iyarpagai Nayanar at

this place. It is said that Indra and Upamanyu Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Irawata Tirtham.

126. POOMPUHAR

1 Km from Tiruchaikadu.

PALLAVANANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Pallavananathar and the Goddess, Soundaryanayaki. Pallava king worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Pallavananathar. It is said that Indra tried to carry away the Lingam from this temple by tying it to his car. The Goddess, on hearing the sound (Ghosham) got alarmed. Hence the Goddess is also known as Ghoshambikai. There is a stone representation of this story showing Indra with his car at the southern side of the temple. The idol of Sambavati Amman, said to have been brought by Indra is also to be seen here. Subramanya's idol in this temple is a perfect image of artistic beauty and natural brilliance. The story goes that the idol, believed originally to have been that of the Tiruchendur Temple, was stolen from there by thieves thinking it was of gold and taken by them on a ship. When the ship was faced with rough waters of the sea and rocked violently, they were frightened and felt that it was the act of the Lord. Therefore, to save their own lives, they threw the idol into the sea, which was later recovered and installed here. The famous Tamil saint, Pattinattar, was born at this place. Now the Government has also built a temple for Kannaki, the heroine of the ancient Tamil Classic, Silappathikaram. Hence this place has become an important tourist centre.

127. PERUMPALLAM

4 Km from Poompuhar.

VALAMPURINATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adornng this temple is known as Valampurinathar and the Goddess, Vaduvakirkanni. It is believed that Mahavishnu worshipped the Lord here and got Valampuri Conch from the Lord. Hence the Lord is known as Valampurinathar.The Bikshadanar Murti is very famous here. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

128. TALAICHANKADU

9 Km from Perumpallam towards Tarangambadi.

SANKARU NATHAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock (locally known as Madakkoil). The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Sankarunathar and the Goddess, Soundaranayaki. It is said that Mahavishnu got a sankh (conch) from the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Sankarunathar .There is a Swayambhu Vinayaka. The tirth is known as Kaveri Tirtham.

129. TIRUKKADAVUR

8 Km from Talaichankadu on way to Tarangambadi. There are two temples.

1. AMRITAGHATESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Ashta Veerattana Kshetras of Lord Siva. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Amritaghateswarar and the Goddess, Abhiramiammai. The

sannidhi is facing west. The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very famous here. Poet Abhiramabattar has sung Abhirami Anthadi on the Goddess. The legend says that Rishi Mrigandu did tapasya for a child. The Lord appeared and inquired as to what kind of a child he wanted, a brilliant child who would live only 16 years or a dull child who would live 100 years ? Mrigandu begged for the intellectual and brilliant one. Thus Markandeya was born. He was very brilliant and a devout Sivabhakta. When the boy attained sixteen years of age, Yama, the God of Death, came to take the life of the child and boasted that no one could stop him from performing his duty. The boy ran to the temple and embraced the Linga seeking refuge with the Lord. The Lord appeared and kicked Yama aside. Thus, by his devotion, Markandeya overcame his fate. Hence the Lord is also known as Kalasamhara. There is an image of this posture in the temple. The tirth is known as Amrita Tirtham.

2. BRAHMAPURINATHAR TEMPLE (TIRUKKADAVUR MAYANAM)

This temple is situated 2 Km from Amritaghateswarar Temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Brahmapurinathar and the Goddess, Malarkuzhaliminnammi. The sannidhi is facing west. It is believed that the Lord burned Brahma here and restored him to life. There is a well the water of which only is used for the Tirumanjanam of the Lord. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

130. AAKKUR

5 Km from Tirukkadavur on way to Semponnarkoil.

TANTONDRIAPPAR TEMPLE(MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord

glorifying this temple is known as Tantondriappar and the Goddess, Katkanetrambikai. It is said that Indra worshipped the Lord here. Sirappuli Nayanar was born and attained Moksha here.The tirth is known as Indra Tirtham.

131. PARASALUR

9 Km from Aakkur via Semponnarkoil.

VEERATTESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Ashta Veerattana Kshetras of Lord Siva. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Veeratteswarar and the Goddess, Valambikai.The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that Daksha Yagna was destroyed in this place and Daksha's head replaced with that of a goat. The tirth is known as Chandra Pushkarini.

132. VILA NAGAR

10 Km from Parasalur via Semponnarkoil on way to Mayuram.

THURAIKATTUVALLAL TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Thuraikattuvallal and the Goddess, Thalainayaki. The murti of Subramanya here is very beautiful. The tirth is known as Meigyana Tirtham.

133. SEMPONNARKOIL

6 Km from Vilanagar.

SWARNAPURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as

Swarnapuriswarar and the Goddess, Sugandhavananayaki. It is said that Indra and Kubera worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Veerabhadra Tirtham.

134. PUNJAI

2 Km from Semponnarkoil towards Poompuhar.

NATRUNAIAPPAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Natrunaiappar and the Goddess, Parvatharajaputri. It is said that Ashtavasus worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Swarna Tirtham.

135. KEELAIYUR

4 Km from Punjai.

KADAIMUDI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kadaimudinathar and the Goddess, Abhirami. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that Indra and Brahma worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Kadaimudi Tirtham.

136. TIRUKKANNAR KOIL

13 Km from Keelaiyur.

KANNAYIRA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kannayiranathar and the Goddess, Murukuvalarkothai. It is said that Indra got rid of a curse by worshipping the Lord here. The tirth is known as Indra Tirtham.

137. TIRUNINRIYUR

5 Km from Tirukkannarkoil.

MAHALAKSHMISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mahalakshmiswarar and the Goddess, Ulaganayaki. It is said that Mahalakshmi worshipped the Lord here.Hence the Lord is known as Mahalakshmiswarar. The tirth is known as Neelamalar Poikai.This is a small but very important temple.

138. VAITHISWARANKOIL

3 Km from Tiruninriyur.

VAITHISWARAR TEMPLE

This is a large and beautiful temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vaithiswarar and the Goddess, Taiyalnayaki. This is a Swayambhu Linga. The sannidhi is facing west. The Lord is believed to have come as a Vaidya and cured Angaraka of leprosy.Hence the lord is known as Vaithiswarar. The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very important here. There is a sannidhi for Subramanya known as Muthukumaraswamy which is very famous. Jatayukundam, where Jatayu's last rites were performed by Rama and Lakshmana, is also here. The ashes of the kundam are considered to be having curative properties. The images of Rama, Lakshmana, Jatayu, Viswamitra and Vasishtha can be seen here. The Navagrahas are placed in a row. Mangal (Angaraka) has an exclusive shrine here and hence this place is also known as Mangal Kshetram and pujas are offered to him, especially, on Tuesday. It is said that Jatayu, Sampati, Subramanya and Sun worshipped the Lord here. Siddhamirtha Tirth is the most important of all the

tirthas here. A dip in it is considered very sacred. There is no frog or snake in this tirth due to a curse by a muni.

139. TIRUPPANGUR

4 Km from Vaithiswarankoil.

SIVALOKA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Sivalokanathar and the Goddess, Chokkanayaki. In this place Nandi moved aside to enable Tirunalaipovar to have darshan of the Lord. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

140. TALAIGNAYIRU

6 Km from Tiruppangur via Manippalam.

KUTRAM PORUTHA NATHAR TEMPLE (KOKKUDI KOIL)

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kutramporuthanathar and the Goddess, Kolvalainayaki. Here also, as at Sirkali temple, the Lord is seen in 3 forms At the ground level is the Lingamurti with the Kokkudimullai tree. Above this, the Lord is as Parvati Parameswarar. And in the third tier, the Lord is seen as Sattanathar. The tirth is known as Indra Tirtham. According to the legend, Indra once cast his Vajrayudha at the Lord and the Lord condoned his sin. Hence the Lord here is known as Kutram (sin) Porutha (forgiven) Nathar (Lord) which in Hindi means Aparadhkshamanathar.

141. TIRUKURAKKUKKA

5 Km from Talaignayiru via Manippalam.

KONTHALA KARUNAI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Konthala Karunainathar and the Goddess, Konthalanayaki. It is believed that Hanuman worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

142. TIRUVALKOLIPUTHUR

7 Km from Tirukurakkukka via Manippalam.

MANICKAVANNAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Manickavannar and the Goddess, Vandarpoongulali. It is said that it was here that Mahavishnu worshipped Lord Siva with Manickam (precious stone). Hence the Lord is known as Manickavannar. It is also said that the Pandavaṣ, before going into agyatavasam (living incognito), hid their weapons here. There is a separate sannidhi for Durga which is considered important here. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

143. ILUPPAIPATTU

3 Km from Tiruvalkoliputhur.

NEELAKANTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Neelakantheswarar and the Goddess, Amritakaravalli. There are also five Lingas said to have been installed by Pancha Pandavas. A Valampuri Vinayaka is also here which

is believed to have been worshipped by Draupadi. There is a poison tank in front of the temple, where Yudhisthira answered the questions posed by the Yaksha. The tirth is known as Amrita Tirtham.

144. KURUKKAI

11 Km from Iluppaipattu.

VIRATTA NATHAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Ashta Veerattana Kshetras of Lord Siva. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Virattanathar and the Goddess, Gnanambikai. It is said that Manmatha (Kamadeva) was burned here by the Lord by opening His third eye. The ashes can still be seen in the soil at this place. It is believed that Markandeya worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

145. PONNUR (TIRUANNIYUR)

3 Km from Kurukkai.

AAPATHSAHAYESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Aapathsahayeswarar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. The temple, though small, is important. It is said that Varuna and Surya worshipped the Lord here. Pujas are also offered to Suryadeva, especially during the Tamil month Panguni. The tirth is known as Varuna Tirtham.

146. ANATHANDAVAPURAM

11 Km from Ponnur.

PANCHAVATISWARAR TEMPLE

This is a big temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Panchavatiswarar and the Goddess, Kalyanasundari.The murti of Nataraja is very attractive. The dance performed here by the Lord is known as Mukhamandala Tandavam.

147. NIDUR

4 Km from Anathandavapuram.

SOMANATHESWARAR TEMPLE

The presiding deity is known as Somanatheswarar and the Devi, Aditya Abhayambikai. During the month of Sravan, Surya Puja on Sunday is very important here. It is believed that Chandra and Indra worshipped the Lord here. Munayaduva Nayanar attained moksha here. The tirth is known as Senkazhani Tirtham.

148. MAYURAM

4 Km from Nidur.

MAYURA NATHAR TEMPLE

This is one of the six kshetras considered equal to Kashi. This is a very big and beautiful temple with an imposing nine storeyed gopuram 164 feet high. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mayuranathar and the Goddess, Abhayambikai. It is said that Mahavishnu, Lakshmi and Indra worshipped the Lord here. According to a legend,a

peacock took refuge with Dakshyayani during the desecration of Daksha Yagna. While sacrificing Herself in the Yagnakundam, She had the peacock in her mind and, as a result, She was reborn as a peahen and did a penance here. The Lord gave Her darshan and thereafter She was reborn as Parvati. The place is, therefore, known as Mayuram and the Lord as Mayuranathar. The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very important. There is a separate sannidhi for Vinayaka known as Mukkuruni Pillayar which is considered very important here. Vrishabha Tirtham at the Kaveri bathing ghat is an important tirth. A dip here in the Tula month (Aswin-Kartik) is considered very sacred.

149. VALUVUR

8 Km from Mayuram.

VIRATTESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Ashta Veerattana Kshetras of Lord Siva. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Viratteswarar and the Goddess, Balagurambikai. The Lord killed here the powerful Gajasura (a demon in the form of an elephant) and wore his skin and tusk showingHis invincibility. Hence the Lord is also known as Gajasamhara. There is an image of this posture in the temple.

150 MOOVALUR

11 Km from Valuvur.

MARGASAHAYAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Margasahayar and the Goddess, Mangalambika. This place is said to be a Trimurti Kshetra, hence considered very important.

151. TERAZHANDOOR

8 Km from Moovalur.

VEDAPURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vedapuriswarar and the Devi, Soundarambikai. The sannidhi is facing west. It is believed that the four Vedas and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Veda Tirtham. It is said that once Indra was passing through this place in his chariot but did not pay obeisance to the Lord. As a result, his chariot got stuck and he could not move. After worshipping the Lord he was able to move from the place. In Tamil 'Ther' means chariot and 'Azhundhu' means stuck and hence the name of the place, Terazhandoor. The great Tamil poet, Kambar, who composed the Ramayana, was born here.

152. KUTTALAM

4 Km from Terazhandoor.

UTHIRAVADISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Uthiravadiswarar and the Devi, Amritamukizhambigai. The sannidhi is facing west. It is believed that Sundaramurti Nayanar was cured of a physical ailment by having a bath in the temple's tank. There is also a sannidhi for Sundaramurti Nayanar. The tirth is known as Sundara Tirtham.

153. TIRUVELVIKUDI

4 Km from Kuttalam.

KALYANA SUNDARESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kalyanasundareswarar and the Goddess, Parimala-sugandanayaki. It is said that a Rajput could not find a priest for performing his marriage ceremony and prayed to the Lord. The Lord Himself then appeared as a purohit and performed the marriage. In Tamil 'Kalyanam' stands for marriage and hence the Lord is known as Kalyana Sundareswarar. Several Yagnas, known as Velvi in Tamil, were performed here and hence the place is called as Velvikudi. The tirth is known as Mangala Tirtham.

154. TIRUMANACHERI

3 Km from Tiruvelvikudi. There are two temples.

1. MANAVALANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Manavalanathar and the Goddess, Yazhinummenmozhiyal. It is said that Manmatha (Kamadeva) worshipped the Lord here. There is also an interesting story of two pregnant women who agreed to get their children-to-be-born married with each other and took a vow to this effect. But as one woman delivered a tortoise shaped boy, the other refused to give her daughter to this boy. By worshipping the Lord here the tortoise shaped boy became normal and married the girl. Unmarried girls, desirous of obtaining suitable matches, worship the Lord here and, as a part of the ritual, offer garlands to the Lord. It is believed that such devoted prayers are fulfilled.

2. IRAWATESWARAR TEMPLE (ETHIR KOLPADY)

This temple is situated near the Manavalanathar temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as

Irawateswarar and the Goddess, Malarkuzhalammai. It is believed that Irawata, the celestial elephant, worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Irawateswarar. The tirth is known as Irawata Tirtham.

155. PANDANALLUR

13 Km from Tirumanacheri **via Kuttalam.**

PASHUPATISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Pashupatiswarar and the Goddess, Kampanatholi. There is a sannidhi for Adi Keshava Perumal. It is said that Kamadhenu worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Pashu Tirtham.

156. TIRUPPANANDAL

10 Km from Pandanallur.

SADAIAPPAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Sadaiappar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. The sannidhi is facing west .It is said that Kungiliyakalaya Nayanar with the power of his bhakti put the slanting Lingamurti in the right position, which the king could not do even with the help of elephants. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham. The Kashimath of Kumaragurupara Swamigal is located here.

157. TIRUVAIPADI

2 Km from Tiruppanandal on way to Kumbakonam.

KSHIRAVANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kshiravananathar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. It is said that Chandesa used to worship Lord Siva here by performing abhishekam with milk to the Linga made of sand. One day his father thought that he was just wasting the milk and kicked the milk-pot. Chandesa, in anger, took the sword and cut his father's leg. The Lord was pleased with the devotion of Chandesa and made him one among the Siva Ganas. The tirth is known as Kshira Tirtham.

158. SENGANALUR

3 Km from Tiruvaipadi.

SATYAGIRISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Satyagiriswarar and the Goddess, Sakhi Devi. It is said that the Lord gave Astras(weapons) to Subramanya for the war with Surapadman. This is the birth place of Saint Chandesa. The River Manni is considered to be the tirtham here.

159. TIRUMANGALAKKUDY

17 Km from Senganalur via Tiruvaipadi.

PRANAVARADESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Pranavaradeswarar and the Goddess, Mangalanayaki. It is believed that Kali worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Mangala Tirtham. It is said that by worshipping the Lord here, the Navagrahas got rid of a curse of Maharishi Kalama due to which they were suffering from leprosy. The Goddess Mangalanayaki showers Her grace, giving long and healthy life to Her devotees. She also removes the malefic

effects of Mars, Rahu and Saturn. The unique effect of a visit to this temple is that women devotees are blessed with 'Mangalya Balam' (long life to their husbands). As the Navagrahas themselves worshipped the Lord here, there is a belief that this temple should be visited first before going to Suryanar Koil.

160. SURYANAR KOIL

3 Km from Tirumangalakkudy.

SURYANARAYANA TEMPLE

This temple is dedicated to the Sun God known as Suryanarayana with his consorts Usha Devi and Pradhusha Devi. The shrine is facing west. In front of the Lord, Brihaspati is seen performing puja to him. At the entrance, there is a stone sculpture of seven horses pulling the chariot of the Sun God and in this a figure of a lion is inset, indicating that the Sun is the Lord of leo. There are separate sannidhis for other Navagrahas. The Navagrahas are believed to influence the destinies of human beings. Hence they are worshipped with a view to acquire peace, prosperity, wealth and longevity of life in the world. There are also separate sannidhis for Kashi Viswanatha and Devi Visalakshi.

161. KANJANOOR

6 Km from Suryanar Koil via Tirumangalakkudy on way to Tirukkodikaval.

AGNISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Agniswarar and the Devi, Karpakanayaki. The tirth is known as Agni Tirtham. It is said that Brahma, Markandeya and

Indra worshipped the Lord here. Haradatta Sivacharya, a Vaishnavite, who later converted to Saivism, was born here. This place is also considered a Sukra Kshetram. Hence the devotees specially visit here for obtaining relief from the malefic effects of Sukra.

162. TIRUKKODIKAVAL

3 Km from Kanjanoor on way to Tiruvelvikudi

KOTISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kotiswarar and the Devi, Vadivambikai. It is said that three crore Rishis worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sringa Tirtham.

163. TIRUVAVADUTHURAI

10 Km from Tirukkodikaval via Kuttalam on way to Narasinganpet.

MASILAMANISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Masilamaniswarar and the Goddess, Oppillamulayal. Here Vinayaka is known as Sundara Vinayaka. It is believed that Devi Uma worshipped the Lord here in the guise of a Cow and hence this place is called Avaduthurai. Tirumoola Nayanar meditated and composed 3,000 Thirumandirams here. It is said that the Lord gave gold to Thirugnana Sambandar to help his father for performing a Yagna. This is the headquarters of Tiruvavaduthurai Adheenam. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

164. TIRUKOZHAMBAM

3 Km from Tiruvavaduthurai.

KOKILESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kokileswarar and the Devi, Soundaranayaki. The scar of cow's hoof can be seen on the Lingamurti. It is said that a Gandharva came here as a Kokila(Koel) due to a curse on him and by worshipping the Lord he got salvation. Hence the Lord is known as Kokileswarar. The tirth is known as Kokila Tirtham.

165. NARASINGANPET

6 Km from Tirukozhambam via Tiruvavaduthurai.

SAMBHU NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Sambhunathar and the Goddess, Lokanayaki. It is said that Narasimha Bhagwan worshipped the Lord here.

166. ADUTHURAI

6 Km from Narasinganpet on way to Kumbakonam.

APATHSAHAYESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Apathsahayeswarar and the Devi, Pavalakodinayaki. It is said that Mrigandu Rishi and Sugriva worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Apathsahaya Tirtham.

167. TIRUNEELAKKUDY

3 Km from Aduthurai.

NILAKANTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Nilakantheswarar and the Devi, Alagammai. Appar sang the famous Tevaram in this temple regarding the Jains' attempt to throw him into the sea. Gingeley (til) oil is used for Abhishekam and a half of the quantity of the oil is consumed by the Linga. Varuna and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Vanneelam Tirtham.

168. TIRUVAIKAN

5 Km from Tiruneelakkudy via Pudur.

VAIKAL NATHAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Vaikalnathar and the Devi, Vaikalmangai. The tirth is known as Surya Tirtham. It is said that Surya and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. There are two more temples here, one of Lord Visveswarar with his consort Visakalshi, on the right side, and the other of Lord Brahmapuriswarar with his consort Brahmanayaki, on the left side. These three temples are considered as the forehead and two eyes of the Lord.

169. TIRUNAGESWARAM

11 Km from Tiruvaikan via Tiruneelakkudy.

CHAMPAKARANYESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as

ardent worship of the Lord here. Because of this belief, devotees come here for attaining mental peace.

171. TIRUBHUVANAM

4 Km from Tiruvidaimarudur on way to Kumbakonam.

KAMPAHARESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kampahareswarar and the Goddess, Dharmasamvardhani. There is a sannidhi for Sarabheswarar, a combination of a bird and a lion. It is said that Lord Siva took this form to appease the fury of Narasimha Bhagwan after killing Hiranyakashipu.

172. TIRUVISALUR

9 Km from Tirubhuvanam via Tiruvidaimarudur.

YOGANATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Yoganathar and the Devi, Shantanayaki. Jata on the head of the Linga can be seen. It is said that Brahma worshipped the Lord here. It is believed that Agastya Muni still worships the Lord here on Sivaratri Day. The tirth is known as Nruthi Tirtham.

173. TIRUNDHU DEVAN KUDI

2 Km from Tiruvisalur. There is no village here and this ancient temple is in the field in a dilapidated condition.

KARKATAKA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord is known as Karkatakanathar and His Consort, Arumarunthammai.It is believed that Katakam(crab) worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Karkatakanathar. It is said that Aswa (Horse) also worshipped the Lord here and got moksha. The tirth is known as Aswa Tirtham.

174. KUMBAKONAM

12 Km from Tirundhudevankudi via Tiruvisalur. There are three important temples :

1. KUMBESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the oldest and most sacred of all the Siva temples situated at Kumbakonam. The Lord is known as Kumbeswarar and the Goddess, Mangalambikai. The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very important here. There is a sannidhi for Adi Vinayaka. It is believed that this Vinayaka came to this place even before Lord Siva and hence known as Adi Vinayaka. The image of Lord Subramanya here has six heads but only six hands instead of the usual twelve hands. The deepa aradhana in the morning is first done to Moon and then to the Lord. In a Mandapam called Navaratri Mandapam, all the 27 Stars (Nakshatra Devatas) and 12 Rasis have been artistically carved on a single block of stone. The legend is that in preparation for the pralaya (the Great Deluge), an earthen pot containing amritam and seeds of creation, decorated with mango leaves, darbha grass, coconut and thread, was placed on Mount Meru by Brahma. When the pralaya took place, the pot was swept away and carried by the current to this place. After the Pralaya was over Lord Siva took the form of a hunter and broke the pot

to pieces by an arrow. The seeds of creation went to Brahma and the amritam spilled over and stagnated at two places here, one of which became the Mahamagham Tirtham and the other the Potramarai Kulam of Sarangapani temple. Out of the broken pieces, the Lord made a linga in the shape of a Kumbha (Pot) and merged into it. This very Linga is enshrined at this temple.Hence the Lord is known as Kumbeswarar.

The tirth is known as Mahamagham Tirtham which is considered very sacred. Once in twelve years, on the day of Magha nakshatra in the month of Magh., devotees by the millions gather and bathe here, as in Kumbh Mela at Prayag. On this auspicious occassion, it is believed that the tank receives water from the Ganga and all the other holy rivers. It is said that Sri Rama, Chandi, Sulochana and many others attained salvation by taking a dip in this tank. There is a temple for Vinayaka on the bank of the tank. A legend connected with this Vinayaka is that He appeared as a boy and ran away with a sugarcane out of one thousand sugarcanes of a vendor. The vendor failed to trace out the boy and later found his other sugarcanes tasteless and without juice because he refused to give a sugarcane to the boy when he (the boy) asked for one. The vendor prayed to Vinayaka at the temple and the Lord showered his grace on him. Hence this Vinayaka is called Karumbayiram Vinayaka (Vinayaka of one thousand sugarcanes).

2. KASHIVISWANATHAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the eastern bank of the Mahamagham Tank. The Lord is known as Kashiviswanathar or Somanathar and the Goddess, Visalakshi or Tennarmozhiyal. The sannidhi is facing west. The nine sacred rivers, in the form of Navakannikas, are said to have worshipped the Lord here. Hence they are also seen

individually in a shrine exclusively dedicated for them. It is said that Chandra also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Chandra Tirtham.

3. NAGESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated in the centre of the town. The Lord is known as Nageswarar and the Goddess, Brahannayaki. It is believed that Adisesha (Nagaraja) worshipped the Lord here and gained strength to bear the burden of the earth (bhoomi) on him. Hence the Lord is known as Nageswarar. It is said that Suryadeva also worshipped the Lord here and regained his lustre which he lost due to a curse of Mahavishnu. Mahavishnu punished him for his arrogance when he quarreled with Sudarshana Chakra. There is a sannidhi for Suryadeva.The Sun's rays penetrate through the openings made in the eastern gopuram and fall on the moolavigraham on three days in the month of Chaitra. The sannidhi of Nataraja is famous for its wealth of sculptural beauty. The chariot-style mandapam carved in stone, on which Nataraja is seated, is a marvellous piece of sculpture.

175. SAKKOTTAI

3 Km from Kumbakonam on way to Nidamangalam.

AMRITA KALAI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Amritakalainathar and the Goddess, Amritavalli. It is said that the Devas worshipped the Lord here after getting the Amrita Kalasam. The River Arisil is considered to be the tirtham

176. SIVAPURAM

1 Km from Sakkottai.

BRAHMAPURI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Brahmapurinathar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. It is said that Varaha Bhagwan and Brahma worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

177. MARUTHANALLUR

3 Km from Sivapuram via Sakkottai.

SARGUNA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Sargunanathar and the Devi, Sarvalankritaminnammai. The Lingamurti is made of sand. It is said that the Rishis Viswamitra and Markandeya worshipped the Lord here.The tirth is known as Sarguna Tirtham. This is a small but very important temple.

178. ALAGAPUTTUR

5 Km from Maruthanallur via Sakkottai on way to Nachiyarkoil.

PADIKKASUVAITHA PARAMAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Padikkasuvaithaparamar and the Goddess, Azhakammai. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that the Lord blessed Pukazhthunai Nayanar with a 'measure of gold coins' which in Tamil means 'Padikkasuvaitha' and hence the Lord is known as Padikkasuvaitha Paramar. Pukazhthunai Nayanar also attained moksha here. The River Arisil is considered to be the tirtham here.

179. TIRUNARAIYUR

3 Km from Alagaputtur.

SIDDHA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Siddhanathar and His consort, Alagambikai. The sannidhi is facing west. It is believed that a siddhar worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Siddhanathar. It is said that Kubera and the Devas also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Thensiddhi Tirtham.

180. TIRUPPANDURAI

3 Km from Tirunaraiyur on way to Karuvili.

SIVANANDESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Sivanandeswarar and the Goddess, Parvatarajakumari (Malaiarasi) It is said that Brahma and Goddess Sakti worshipped the Lord here.The tirth is known as Ananda Tirtham. This is a small but very important temple.

181. KARUVILI

9 Km from Tiruppandurai.

SARGUNA NATHAR TEMPLE (KOTTITTAI)

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Sargunanathar and the Goddess, Sarvanganayaki. It is said that King Sarguna worshipped the Lord here and got moksha. Hence the Lord is known as Sargunanathar. The tirth is known as Sarguna Tirtham. This is a small but very important temple.

182. KONERIRAJAPURAM

3 Km from Karuvili.

UMAMAHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Umamaheswarar and the Devi, Mangalanayaki. The sannidhi is facing west. The Nataraja murti is very big. In Sivapuranam, this place is mentioned as Tirunallam. It is said that Goddess Sakti and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sakti Tirtham.

183. TIRUVANNIYUR

6 Km from Konerirajapuram.

AGNISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Agniswarar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that Agnideva worshipped the Lord here and got relief from the curse of Veerabhadra. Hence the Lord is known as Agniswarar. The tirth is known as Agni Tirtham.

184. SIRKUDY

6 Km from Tiruvanniyur.

MANGALESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mangaleswarar and the Devi, Mangalanayaki. It is believed that Mangal (Angaraka) worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Mangaleswarar. It is said that Garuda also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Mangala Tirtham.

185. TIRUPAMBURAM

2 Km from Sirkudy.

PAMBU NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Pambunathar and the Goddess, Vandarpoonkuzhali. It is said that Nagaraja and Mangal (Angaraka) worshipped the Lord here. There is also a sannidhi for Nagaraja . The tirth is known as Adisesha Tirtham.

186. TIRUVEEZHI MIZHALAI

8 Km from Tirupamburam via Sirkudy.

VEEZHIYAMUKAR TEMPLE

This is a big temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Veezhiyamukar and the Goddess, Sundarakuchambikai. Behind the Linga, the Murti of Parvati Parameswar can be seen. The tirth is known as Hari Tirtham. According to the legend, Mahavishnu was worshipping the Lord here with 1,000 lotus flowers One day one flower was short for the Archana. So, Mahavishnu pulled out one of his own eyes and used it as a flower and completed the archana. Lord Siva was pleased with the devotion of Mahavishnu and gave him Sudarshana Chakra. Hence, the Lord is known as Veezhiyamukar (Netrapaneeswarar). Today also, at the feet of the Lord, one can see the image of an eye and the Sudarshana Chakra in the sanctum.

187. TIRUVANCHIYAM

8 Km from Tiruveezhimizhalai.

VANCHIYA NATHAR TEMPLE

This is one of the six Kshetras considered equal to

Kashi. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vanchiyanathar and the Goddess, Valavandanayaki. According to the legend, Mahavishnu separated from Lakshmi because of a divine Sankalpa. So, He came here and worshipped the Lord to get back Lakshmi. As Mahavishnu desired (Vancha in Sanskrit) to get back Lakshmi, this place is called Tiruvanchiyam. There is a sannidhi for Yama (God of Death). It is believed that those who die here would not go to Yamaloka. The tirth is known as Guptaganga Tirtham which is considered very sacred. Childless couples who worship the Lord here after taking a bath in the tirtham are said to be blessed with children.

188. KODAVASAL

12 Km from Tiruvanchiyam.

KONESWARAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Koneswarar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki.The sannidhi is facing west. There is no separate sannidhi for Durga as the Devi Herself is Ma Durga. It is believed that Bindhu Rishi worshipped the Lord here and the Lord gave him darshan in a vessel of water. It is said that Garuda also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Amrita Tirtham.

189. TIRUNAALUR MAYANAM

4 Km from Kodavasal.

PALAVANESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Palavaneswarar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. It is said that Narada and Apasthamba Rishis worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Palavadi Tirtham.

190. TIRUCHERAI

3 Km from Tirunaalur Mayanam.

SENNERIAPPAR TEMPLE (UDAYAR KOIL)

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Senneriappar and the Goddess, Gnanavalli. There is no gopuram at the main entrance. It is said that Doumya Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Manohara Tirtham.

191. ANDAN KOIL

12 Km from Tirucherai via Kodavasal.

SWARNAPURINATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Swarnapurinathar and the Goddess, Sivambikai. It is said that Rishi Kashyapa worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Swarna Tirtham.

192. ALANGUDI

7 Km from Andankoil via Valangiman.

KASHIARANYESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kashi Aranyeswarar and the Goddess, Ulageswari. This is also known as Brihaspati (Guru) Kshetram. Hence Dakshinamurti is specially worshipped by devotees on Thursday. It is said that Rishi Viswamitra worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Kashi Tirtham.

193. TIRUKKALAMBUR

17 Km from Alangudi via Valangiman and Andankoil on way to Tiruvarur.

VILVAVANESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vilvavaneswarar and the Devi, Soundaranayaki. It is said that Sambandar successfully crossed the flooded Mulliyaru River on a boat, without an oarsman, by singing hymns on the Lord. It is said that Rishi Sandilya worshipped the Lord here. The River Kudamurutti is considered to be the tirtham here.

194. TALAIYALANGADU

3 Km from Tirukkalambur.

ADAVALLESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Adavalleswarar and the Goddess, Tirumadanthai. It is said that when Appar visited this place he saw only the heads of Lord Siva. He thought if he walked by his legs it would be a sin, so he walked by his head. It is said that Maharishi Kapila worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Swarna Tirtham. This ancient temple is now in a dilapidated condition.

195. KATTUR AYYAMPETTAI

3 Km from Talaiyalangadu.

PIRIYATHA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Piriyathanathar and the Goddess, Elavarkuzhali. The Somaskanda Murti here is very big and beautiful. It is said

that Goddess Sakti and Rishi Gautama worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sakti Tirtham.

196. KARAYAPURAM

4 Km from Kattur Ayyampettai on way to Tiruvarur.

KARAVEERESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Karaveereswarar and the Devi, Pratiyakshaminnammai. There is no dwajastambham in this temple. It is said that Rishi Gautama worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Anavarada Tirtham. .

197. TIRUVARUR

8 Km from Karayapuram.

1. TYAGARAJA TEMPLE

The temple is famous for its size and beauty. This is one of the Sapta Vidanga Kshetras of Tyagaraja. It is also considered one of the Pancha Bhoota Kshetras and said to represent Prithvi (Earth), like the Ekambareswarar temple of Kancheepuram. The Lord, Tyagaraja, in his sannidhi as Somaskandar is on a richly decorated ratna simhasanam, along with his consort, Sakti Kondi, and their son, Muruga (Kartick). In a separate shrine, the Devi gives darshan as Neelotpalambikai, as if blessing her son, Muruga. The Lord's dance here is known as Ajapa Natanam. The spatikalingam of Tyagaraja known as Veedhi Vidangar is specially worshipped daily. Panchamukha Vadyam, a rare musical instrument of ancient origin, is played every day during the pujas. Nandi is said to have played on this vadyam when Lord Siva danced. Nandi in a standing posture in the sanctum is

a rare feature. He is carved in a human form decked with nagabharanam, matted locks and a crescent moon. The navagrahas, placed in a row facing the shrine is another feature here. The rajagopuram is 146 feet high and made entirely of brick and mortar. The thousand pillared mandapam called Devasriya Mandapam is beautiful with wall paintings. The presiding deity is Vanmikanathar, with His consort Somakalambikai. The sannidhi of Devi Kamalambikai is also very important. She is seen doing penance in a yogasana posture. The tirth is known as Kamalalayam Tirtham. There are 108 Lingas within this temple which are said to have been installed by Gods, saints and kings like Brahma, Rama, Dharmaputra, Arjuna, Nala, Harischandra, Vasishtha, Viswamitra and others. This place is also known as Chandra Kshetram. This temple is also famous for its big and beautiful chariot. There is a story about the King, Manunithicholan, an ardent Sivabhakta, who responded to the wailing cow whose calf was run over and killed under the wheels of the chariot driven by his son. He saw no way of doing justice to the cow other than by putting his own son under the chariot wheel, which he did. The Lord, pleased with his bhakta's sense of justice, gave him darshan and restored both the calf and the prince to their lives. A sculptural presentation of this story can be seen near the chariot. The origin of the Tyagaraja Temple is attributed to Muchukunda Chakravarti. He did tapasya here for darshan of the Lord. Lord Siva was pleased with his devotion. He graced the king with a vision of His form and directed him to build a temple at Tiruvarur. Muchukunda built this temple but could not find a suitable murti to be installed here. He approached Indra for the Tyagaraja Murti which Indra was worshipping. Indra was not willing to part with it. He played a trick by placing it before Muchukunda along with six other similar looking murtis and asked him to choose the one he

wanted. By the grace of God, Muchukunda picked up the original murti of Tyagaraja. Indra was pleased and gifted all the seven Lingamurtis to Muchukunda. Muchukunda installed in this temple the murti which was worshipped by Indra. The other Lingamurtis are installed in other temples which are also known as Vidanga Kshetras of Tyagaraja. It is believed that Indra visits all these seven temples once in a year and performs puja. That day is celebrated at all these temples.

2. ARA-NERI-APPAR TEMPLE

This temple is located in the second prakaram of Tyagaraja Temple. The Lord is known as Araneriappar or Achalewarar and the Devi, Akhileswari. A significance of the Lingamurti is that its shadow can be seen only in the eastern direction and the shadow is not visible to one who is destined to die within a period of six months. Nami-Nandi-Adigal Nayanar used to worship the Lord here by lighting the lamps daily. Due to poverty, he was not able to procure the oil required for lighting the lamps. The local jains wounded his sentiments by saying that if there was no oil, his God should help him to light the lamps with water. Taking it as the Lord's own words, the bhakta used water in place of oil and lighted the lamps by the miracle of the Lord.

3. MANDALESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is located near the chariot of the Tyagaraja Temple. The Lord is known as Mandaleswarar and the Goddess, Panchilmelladiammai. It is said that Varuna (God of Water) flooded the place with water and made it look like a sea. But the Lord dried it up fully. Thereafter Varuna worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Varuna Pushkarini. It is also said that Sundarar regained his eye-sight after taking a dip in this tirth.

198. TIRUVILAMAR

3 Km from Tiruvarur on way to Nidamangalam.

PATANJALI MANOKARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Patanjalimanokarar and the Devi, Yazhinummenmozhiyal. It is said that Rishi Patanjali worshipped the Lord here.The tirth is known as Mukti Tirtham.

199. KEKKARAI

9 Km from Tiruvilamar via Tiruvarur.

MUKKONA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Mukkonanathar and His consort, Maimevumkanni. Moorka Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Mukkoodal Tirtham.

200. VIRKUDI

15 Km from Kekkarai via Tiruvarur.

VEERATESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Ashta Veerattana Kshetras of Lord Siva. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Veerateswarar and the Devi, Elavarkuzhali. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that the samhara of Jalandarasura was done by the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sarkarai Tirtham.

201. PAYATRANGUDI

5 Km from Virkudi on way to Tirumarugal.

PAYATRUR NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Payatrurnathar and the Goddess, Kaviyankanni. It is said that Bhairava worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Karunai Tirtham.

202. TIRUMARUGAL

10 Km from Payatrangudi.

MANICKAVANNAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Manickavannar and the Goddess, Vanduvarkulali. It was here that Gnanasambandar brought back to life a dead man bitten by a snake. King Kuchaketha worshipped the Lord here for rain to end the famine in his kingdom. By the grace of the Lord the rain came and thus the famine ended. It is said that Markandeya worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Manicka Tirtham.

203. SANGAMANGAI

2 Km from Tirumarugal.

AYAVANTI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ayavantinathar and the Goddess, Malarkannammai. The sannidhi is facing west. This is the birth place of Tiruneelanakka Nayanar. It is said that Rishi Ashtavakra worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Arpuda Sivagangai Tirtham.

204. TIRUCHENGATTANKUDI

4 Km from Sangamangai via Tirumarugal.

UTTARA PATISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Uttarapatiswarar and the Goddess, Tirukuzhanayaki. It is said that Ganapati worshipped the Lord here, hence the place is also known as Ganapatiswaram. The tirth is known as Ganapati Tirtham. There is a sannidhi for Vatapi Ganapati which is considered to be a great varaprasadi. The Navatandava Murtis here are rare specimens of ancient art and culture. There is a very interesting story of a great Sivabhakta called Siruthonda Nayanar. He used to feed at least one devotee of Lord Siva everyday before taking his meal otherwise he would fast along with his family members that day. The Lord in order to test his devotion one day came here disguised as a brahmin by the name of 'Uttarapati'. When Siruthondar learnt about the brahmin visitor he went to the temple to invite him for food. But the brahmin put some conditions. He said he would take only the flesh of the eldest son of the family duly cooked as his food. To make it more agonising, He further desired that such dismembering of the child should be done by the parents themselves. They should also not shed a single drop of tear while doing so. Siruthondar agreed to the conditions and went home and ordered his only son to sit on the laps of his mother and cut his body and cooked the same. After all upachara rituals, he requested the brahmin to sit for food. Then the brahmin told them that he would not take meal alone and asked Siruthondar for his other child to sit with him The couple told him, that, as they had cooked their only son, there could not be any other child in the house and requested the brahmin to take the food. Then the brahmin told them to call their son from the street. Accordingly, they went out and

called aloud the name of their son 'Sirala'. The child immediately came running as usual. With tears of joy, the couple came inside with the son, but could not find the brahmin who had by then disappeared. Thus their devotion fully tested, the Lord appeared before them and gave moksha to the entire family. The images of Siruthonda Nayanar, his wife Tiruvenkattu Mangai and son Siralan and maid servant Santana Mangai can be seen in this temple.

205. RAMANATHESWARAM

3 Km from Tiruchengattankudi.

RAMALINGESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Ramalingeswarar and the Goddess, Sarivarkuzhali. It is said that Sri Rama worshipped the Lord here.Hence the Lord is known as Ramalingeswarar. It is said that Rishi Mrigandu also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Rama Tirtham.

206. TIRUPPUGALUR

2 Km from Ramanatheswaram.

1. AGNISWARAR TEMPLE

This is a big temple having a huge tower. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Agniswarar and the Devi, Karuntharkuzhalammai The Lingamurti is in a slanting position. It is said that Agnideva worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Agniswarar.There is a sannidhi for Vatapi Ganapati which is considered very important. The tirth is known as Agni Tirth am. Tirunavukkarasu Nayanar d moksha here.

2. VARDHAMANISWARAR TEMPLE

This is situated inside the Agniswarar Temple on the northern side. The presiding deity is known as Vardhamaniswarar and the Devi, Karuntharkuzhali. Muruga Nayanar was born here. It is said that Badal (clouds) worshipped the Lord here.

207. TIRUPPANAIYUR

8 Km from Tiruppugalur via Nannilam Railway Station.

SOUNDARA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Soundaranathar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. It is believed that the Lord gave darshan to Sundaramurti Nayanar in His dancing pose. It is said that Mahalakshmi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Mahalakshmi Tirtham.

208. TIRUKONDISWARAM

4 Km from Tiruppanaiyur via Nannilam Railway Station.

PASHUPATISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Pashupatiswarar and the Devi, Santanayaki. This is a Swayambhu Linga. It is said that Kamadhenu worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Pashu Tirtham. There is a sannidhi for Jwaradeswarar who cures all types of fever and people especially worship him to get relief.

209. NANNILAM

3 Km from Tirukondiswaram.

PRAKASESWARAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Prakaseswarar and the Devi, Prakaseswari. It is said that Suryadeva worshipped the Lord here. It is also said that Jalandasura gave a lot of trouble to the people. They prayed to the Lord for relief. By His grace, a huge swarm of honeybees raided the demon and killed him. Hence the Lord is also known as Madhuvaneswarar. The tirth is known as Suryakanta Tirtham.

210. KOOTHANUR

12 Km from Nannilam via Poonthottam.

SARASWATI TEMPLE

The presiding deity of this temple is known as Goddess Saraswati. It is said that the famous Tamil Poet Ottakoothar worshipped Her and obtained gnana.

211. TILATARPANAPURI

3 Km from Koothanur.

MUKTESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mukteswarar and the Devi, Porkodinayaki. It is said that Sri Rama and Lakshmana performed tarpans with 'til' for Dasaratha and Jatayu here. Hence the place is known as Tilatarapanapuri. The tirth is known as Chandra Tirtham. There is no rajagouram or dwajastambham here. This ancient temple is now in a dilapidated condition.

212. MAKALAM

8 Km from Tilatarpanapuri via Poonthottam.

KALAKANDESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kalakandeswarar and His consort, Pachainayaki. It is said that Rishi Makalar worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Makalar Tirtham.

213. AMBAL

3 Km from Makalam.

BRAHMAPURISWARAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Brahmapuriswarar and the Goddess, Poonkulalnayaki. It is said that Brahma worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Brahmapuriswarar. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham. Somasimara Nayanar attained moksha here.

214. PERALAM

10 Km from Ambal via Poonthottam.

SWAYAMBHU NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Swayambhunathar and the Goddess, Bhavani. This is a Swayambhu Linga. It is said that Perala Maharishi worshipped the Lord here and hence the place is known as Peralam.

215. TIRUMIYACHUR

2 Km from Peralam.

1. MUYARCHI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Muyarchinathar and the Goddess, Soundaranayaki. It is said that Suryadeva worshipped the Lord here and as prayed for by him the Lord gave him darshan with Devi, sitting on an elephant. Hence the Vimanam over the grabhagriham is in the shape of an elephant. Devi is in the sitting posture. The tirth is known as Suryapushkarini. Rathasaptami day is considered most auspicious for offering pujas to Suryadeva here.

2. SAKALA BHUVANESWARAR TEMPLE (ELANKOIL)

This is situated inside the temple of Muyarchinathar. The presiding deity is known as Sakalabhuvaneswarar and the Devi, Minnumegalayal. It is said that Brahma, Sar [illegible]ti and Kali worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is k[illegible] Saraswati Tirtham.

216. TIRUKOTTARAM

16 Km from Tirumiyachur via Peralam and Kollumangudi.

IRAWATESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Irawateswarar and the Devi, Vandamarpoonkuzhali. It is said that Irawata worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Irawateswarar. The tirth is known as Irawata Tirtham. This is a small but very important temple.

217. TIRUNALLARU

11 Km from Tirukottaram.

DARBHARANYESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord of this famous temple is known as Darbharanyeswarar and the Goddess, Bhogamarthapoonmulayal. The Lingamurti looks like a bundle of darbha grass. It is said that King Nala, along with his wife Damayanti, went through untold suffering due to the ill effects of the planet Saturn, which he was finally able to get rid of by worshipping the Lord at this place. This is one of the Sapta Vidanga Kshetras of Tyagaraja and His dance here is known as Unmatha Natanam. A maragatha lingam of Tyagaraja known as Nagara Vidangar is specially worshipped daily. This place is also known as Sani Kshetram. Sani Bhagwan has an exclusive shrine here and is considered very powerful. Devotees throng here especially on Saturday and offer pujas with great devotion. Special pujas are held once in 27 months when Sani changes position in the Rasi chakram. The tirth is known as Brahmadanda Tirtham.

218. DHARMAPURAM

4 Km from Tirunallaru on way to Karaikal.

YAZHMURI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Yazhmurinathar and the Devi, Madhuramminnambikai. According to the legend, Tirugnanasambandar was used to singing hymns on the Lord with the accompaniment of Bana on the ancient musical instrument known as Yazhi. Bana's relatives thought that Gnanasambandar could not have sung so well without the help of Bana. Such a view adopted about

His bhakta was too much for the Lord to bear. With His blessings, Gnanasambandar sang a song in the metre 'Yazhmuri' which could not be played on the Yazhi by Bana. The relatives of Bana realised their folly of having slighted the greatness of Gnanasambandar. Hence the Lord is known as Yazhmurinathar. It is said that Dharmaraja, Brahma and Rambha worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Kali Tirtham.

219. KARAIKAL

2 Km from Dharmapuram. There are two important temples.

1. KAILASA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kailasanathar and the Devi, Sundarambal. This is a Swayambhu Linga. There is a sannidhi for Karaikkalammayar, a woman saint, to whom 'Mukti' was given by the Lord directly. A mango festival is celebrated here in her honour every year.

2. PARVATISWARAR TEMPLE (TIRUTELICHERI)

This temple is situated about 1 Km from the Kailasanathar Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Parvatiswarar and the Goddess, Satyambal. It is said that Devi Parvati worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Parvatiswarar. The tirth is known as Parvati Tirtham.

220. TIRUVETTAKUDI

7.5 Km from Karaikal on way to Trangambadi.

TIRUMENI ALAGAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Tirumenialagar and the Goddess, Santanayaki. It is said Arjuna worshipped the Lord here and the Lord gave him darshan as a hunter. The tirth is known as Alagu Tirtham.

221. NAGAPATTINAM

29.5 Km from Tiruvettakudi via Karaikal and Nagore.

KAYAROHANA SWAMI TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kayarohanaswami. He gave moksham to Pundarika Maharishi bodily (Kaya Arohana) and, to mark this, there is a mandapam called Mukti Mandapam. The Goddess is known as Neelayadakshi. The idol of the Goddess is said to have been brought from the region of the Nile River in Egypt. The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very famous and considered as one among the Saktipeethas. It is said that Nagaraja worshipped the Lord here. Hence the place is known as Nagapattinam. This is one of the Sapta Vidanga kshetras of Tyagaraja and His dance here is known as Para-vara-taranga Natanam. A gomedaka lingam of Tyagaraja known as Sundara Vidangar is specially worshipped daily. The tirth is known as Sarva Tirtham. Athipathi Nayanar was here.

222. SIKKAL

5 Km from Nagapattinam on way to Tiruvarur.

NAVANEETA NATHAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Navaneetanathar and the

Devi, Velnedunkanni. It is said that Kamadhenu, the divine cow, stayed here and its never-ending flow of milk solidified into butter. Rishi Vasishtha, the owner of the cow, made a Linga out of the butter and worshipped it. But when, later, he wanted to lift the linga, he found that it had stuck at the spot (Sikkikondathu in Tamil). Hence the place is called Sikkal. There is a sannidhi for Lord Muruga known as Singaravelavar, which is very famous. It is said that Subramanya received the 'Vel' (spear), a single headed weapon of immense powers, from his mother Velnedunkanni at this place to fight with Surapadma. It is said, even today, one can see the marvel of His forehead getting dotted with sweat during the Skanda Sashthi festival of the temple when the unique presentation of the 'Vel' is formally re-enacted. There is also a sannidhi for Kolavamana Peruamal. The tirth is known as Navaneeta Tirtham.

223. KILVELUR

6 Km from Sikkal on way to Tiruvarur.

AKSHAYALINGESWARAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Akshayalingeswarar and the Devi, Vanamulainayaki. It is believed that Akshaya Deva worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Akshayalingeswarar. It is said that Parvati in the form of Kali protected Her son Subramanya's penance from all the five sides including the sky. Hence she is known as Panchamukha Ambal. She has a separate sannidhi in the first prakara and is considered to be a Varaprasadi. The sannidhi of Subramanya is also considered very important. The tirth is known as Akshaya Tirtham.

224. THEVUR

6 Km from Kilvelur.

DEVAGURU NATHAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Devagurunathar and the Goddess, Madhurabhashini. It is believed that Devaguru Brihaspati worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Devagurunathar. It is said that Indra, Gautama Rishi and Ahalya also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Brihaspati Tirtham.

225. KANRAPUR

9 Km from Thevur via Adamangalam.

NADUTARI APPAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Nadutariappar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. The tirth is known as Prasanna Tirtham. According to the legend, a Saiva woman married a Vaishnava man but was worshipping a bamboo stump used for tying the calf, treating it as Sivalingam, without the knowledge of her Vaishnava husband and his people. When her husband came to know about this, he got angry and cut the bamboo stump with an axe. The Lord appeared from the centre of the bamboo stump and hence He is known as Nadutarinathar. A mark of the axe can be seen on the Lingamurti.

226. VALIVALAM

4 Km from Kanrapur.

MANATHUNAINATHAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord

glorifying this temple is known as Manathunainathar and the Devi, Mazhayankanniammai. A bird karikuruvi (sparrow) worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Karanagangai Tirtham.

227. TIRUKKUVALAI

7 Km from Valivalam.

KOLILI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kolilinathar and the Goddess, Vandamarpoonkuzhali. The Lingamurti is made of white sand. It is said that Brahma worshipped the Lord here. This is one of the Sapta Vidanga Kshetras of Tyagaraja and His dance here is known as Biringa Natanam. The Vidangamurti of Tyagaraja, here known as Avani Vidangar, is specially worshipped daily. It is said that by singing hymns on the Lord , Sundarar got the help of Bhootganas for transporting paddy to Tiruvarur from here. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

228. ETTUKUDI

3 Km from Tirukkuvalai.

SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE

This is one of the ancient temples of Lord Muruga. The presiding deity is known as Subramanyaswamy. There are separate sannidhis for Lord Sundareswarar and Devi Anandavalli.

229. TIRUVAIMUR

2 Km from Ettukudi.

VAIMUR NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vaimurnathar and the Goddess, Palinumnanmozhiyal. This is one of the Sapta Vidanga Kshetras of Tyagaraja and His dance here is known as Kamala Natanam. The Vidangamurti of Tyagaraja, here known as Nila Vidangar, is specially worshipped daily. It is said Muchukunda Chakravarti worshipped the Lord here. Ashthadik Bhairava and Navagrahas are in one row. The tirth is known as Chandamrita Tirtham.

230. CHITAIMUR

7 Km from Tiruvaimur via Ettukudi.

PONVAITHA NAYAKAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Ponvaithanayakar and His consort, Akhilandeswari. It is said that Siddhas worshipped the Lord here in the form of honey bees. Even today one can see a honeycomb in the south prakaram. The tirth is known as Akhilanda Tirtham. It is also said that the Lord gave gold to His bhakta, Vibudan. There is a legend that, in order to clear the doubts of a merchant about his wife,the Lord changed the position of the Nandi to the back of the temple and Atthi Vriksha to the front.

231. THANDALAICHERI

10 Km from Chitaimur via Alathanpadi on way to Tirutturaipundi.

NEENERI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Neenerinathar and His consort, Gnanambikai. Arivattaya Nayanar attained moksha here. It is said that Mahavishnu shed His tortoise form here. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

232. KAICHINAM

7 Km from Thandalaicheri on way to Tiruvarur.

KAICHINNA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kaichinnanathar and the Goddess, Velvalainayaki. It is said that Thiranabindu Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Indra Tirtham. It is also said that Indra made a Linga out of sand and worshipped the Lord here. While lifting it for installation, his finger prints (Kai-chinnam) were left on the Linga and hence the Lord is known as Kaichinnanathar. The finger prints can be seen on the Lingamurti. Dakshinamurti is considered very important here.

233. TIRUNELLIKAVAL.

6 Km from Kaichinam.

NELLIVANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Nellivananathar and the Goddess, Mangalanayaki. The

sannidhi is facing west. It is said Surya and the Rishis of Daruka Vanam worshipped the Lord here. It is also said that twice in the year, during the Tamil months of Masi (Feb/Mar) and Aippasi (Oct/Nov), the sun's rays fall on the Lord for seven days in the evening hours. The tirth is known as Arpuda Tirtham.

234. TIRUTENGUR

1.5 Km from Tirunellikaval.

VELLI MALAI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Vellimalainathar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. It is said Lakshmi, Hariharaputrar and the Navagrahas worshipped the Lord here. The Navagraha murtis are in the shape of lingas. The tirth is known as Karunakara Tirtham.

235. TIRUKKOLLIKADU

3.5 Km from Tirutengur.

AGNISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Agniswarar and the Goddess, Panchinmelladiammai. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that Sudikshina Rishi and Veerabhadra worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Agni Tirtham. There is a separate sannidhi for Sani Bhagwan.

236. TIRUKKARAIVASAL

10 Km from Tirukkollikadu via Tirunellikaval on way Tiruvarur.

KANNAYIRA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kannayiranathar and the Goddess, Kailasanayaki. This is one of the Sapta Vidanga Kshetras of Tyagaraja and His dance here is known as Kukkuta Natanam. The Vidangamurti of Tyagaraja, here known as Adi Vidangar, is specially worshipped daily. It is said that Indra and Muchukunda Chakravarti worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Indra Tirtham.

237. TIRUNATTIYATHANKUDI

11 Km from Tirukkaraivasal on way to Koothanallur.

RATNAGIRI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Ratnagirinathar and the Goddess, Mangalambika. Kotpuli Nayanar attained moksha here. It is said that Rishi Nibakandu worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Maha Tirtham.

238. OHAIPARAIYUR

20 Km from Tirunattiyathankudi via Koothanallur and Kamalapuram.

JAGADISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Jagadiswarar and the Goddess, Pennamirthanayaki. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that Varuna worshipped the Lord here. The murti of Nataraja is very beautiful and worth seeing. The tirth is known as Varuna Tirtham.

239. PAMANI

17 Km from Ohaiparaiyur via Koothanallur on way to Mannargudi.

SARPAPURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Sarpapuriswarar and the Devi, Amirtanayaki. It is said that Rishi Dhananjaya, in the form of a snake like Patanjali, and Nagaraja worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Sarpapuriswarar. The tirth is known as Naga Tirtham.

240. TIRUVENDURAI

18 Km from Pamani via Mannargudi. **on way to Kaichinam.**

VENDURAI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vendurainathar and the Devi, Venedunkanni. There is no dwajastambham in this temple. The tirth is known as Tarala Tirtham. It is said that Bhringi Rishi worshipped the Lord here. There is a very interesting story connected with Bhringi Rishi. He was a staunch devotee of Lord Siva. He pierced the body of Ardhanariswarar and did pradakshina only to the Lord leaving the Goddess aside.

241. KOTTUR

13 Km from Tiruvendurai on way to Tirutturaipundi.

KOZHUNTHU NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kozhunthunathar and the Goddess, Madhuravachani. Here

the Lord is facing west and the Goddess is facing east. It is said that Kuchha Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Amrita Tirtham.

242. TIRUKALAR

6 Km from Kottur.

KALARMULAINATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kalarmulainathar and the Devi, Azhakeswari. It is said that Kala Muni worshipped the Lord here. Durvasa Rishi also worshipped the Lord here and the Lord gave him darshan in a dancing pose. The Nataraja image is worth seeing. The sannidhi of Muruga is also very famous here. The tirth is known as Durvasa Tirtham.

243. VEDARANYAM

44 Km from Tirukalar via Tirutturaipundi.

VEDARANYESWARAR TEMPLE

This is a very big and important temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vedaranyeswarar or Satyagiriswarar and the Goddess, Yazhaipazhithamozhiyal. The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very important here. Devi Parvati defeated Saraswati at this place in the art of tuning the veena. Hence she is also known as Veena Vibhooshini. There is also a shrine for Saraswati who is seen without Her Veena in the posture of doing penance. The Lingamurti here is said to be a permanent one and suffers no destruction even during the Yugapralaya. The Four Vedas and the Puranas took shelter here during the Great Deluge and re-appeared

when the Lord created the world again. A few years ago, a cyclone deluged the entire town but not a drop of water entered into the temple which provided shelter to thousands of refugees. This is one of the Sapta Vidanga Kshetras of Tyagaraja, and His dance here is known as Hamsapada Natanam. The Vidangamurti of Tyagaraja, here known as Bhuvani Vidangar, is specially worshipped daily. Lord Siva and Parvati gave darshan in their wedding costume to Sage Agastya. This scene can be seen behind the Lingamurti. This place is also called Dakshin Kailas. This temple is famous for lighting of lamps with ghee. There is a legend that once, during late in the night, the lamp before the Lord was giving dim light and was about to extinguish. The Lord told His consort, Parvati, that anybody who would kindle the light and make it burn bright would become the lord of the three worlds. At that time, a rat approached the lamp with the idea of feeding on the ghee in it and dragged the wick with its mouth. As a result, the deepa was re-kindled and burned bright. Parvati asked Siva to keep His word. The Lord blessed the rat to be born as a son to King Virochana. The son of Virochana was Maha Bali who became the lord of the three worlds. It is, therefore, believed that if anybody lights a deepam here will attain unique fame and supremacy. Sri Rama, after his return from Lanka, was followed by veerahatti dosha (sin of killing heroes and warriors). As advised by his guru, Vasishtha, Sri Rama came to Vedaranyam. On reaching here, the ghost of veerahatti made a roaring noise and disturbed the Vinayaka stationed there. Vinayaka raised his leg and dealt a terrific blow to the ghost. The veerahatti got terrified and stood dumbfounded. On the spot where the ghost stood, a 'stupa' has been constructed and an obstruction put to prevent pilgrims from going round the stupa

as otherwise the veerahatti ghost would follow them. Sri Rama was very pleased and worshipped this Vinayaka. Thereafter this Vinayaka came to be known as Veerahatti Vinayaka. There is a small pillar-like round stone of 27 inches height and 12 inches girth which could be rotated like a grinding stone. The belief is that if childless women turn it for some time they beget children. An imposing image of Goddess Gajalakshmi is to be found in the northwest corner of the outer prakaram, installed over an underground vault whch is used in emergency for safe-keeping of valuables. A passage is cut in the wall behind the deity not easily visible. In the same room, there is also an idol of Sani probably to terrify miscreants, if any. The tirth is known as Manikarnika Tirtham. Vedaranyam is also known as Adi Setu in the Puranas. A bath at the sea here during Ardhodhya and Mahodhya is considered holy. Once Appar and Gnanasambandar found the main gate of the sannidhi locked by the Four Vedas and sang a song praying to the Lord for the gate to be opened. The gate opened and, after their worship of the Lord, it closed again. The image of Chandikeswarar at this temple is seen with his consort Chandikeswari which is unusual, as he is generally seen alone.

244. AGASTYAN PALLI

2 Km from Vedaranyam.

AGASTISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Agastiswarar and the Devi, Pakkampiriyalnayaki. It is said that Agastya Muni worshipped the Lord here and the Lord

gave him darshan in His wedding scene with Parvati. The tirth is known as Agastya Tirtham.

245. KODIKKARAI

6 Km from Agastyanpalli on way to Point Calimere.

AMRITAGHATA NATHAR TEMPLE (KULAGAR KOIL)

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Amritaghatanathar and the Devi, Mayyarthadamkanni. The tirth is known as Amirta Tirtham. It is said that Vayudeva worshipped the Lord here. A bath at the sea here is considered very sacred. From Point Calimere one could take a view of the sea as at Kanyakumari.

246. IDUMBAVANAM

36 Km from Kodikkarai via Vedaranyam on way to Muttupet.

SARGUNA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Sargunanathar and the Devi, Mangalanayaki. Behind the lingamurti there is a murti of Parvati Parameswarar. Vinayaka here is in white colour. The tirth is known as Sumuga Pushkarini. It is said that Idumban worshipped the Lord here.

247. KADIKKULAM

1 Km from Idumbavanam.

KARPAKA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Karpakanathar and the Goddess Soundaranayaki. Vinayaka here is known as Karpaka Vinayakar. It is said that Vinayaka worshipped the Lord here and received Mango fruit from Him. The tirth is known as Vinayakar Kanda Tirtham.

248. KOILUR

15 Km from Kadikkulam via Muttupet.

MANTRA PURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mantrapuriswarar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. This is a Swayambhulinga which is white in colour. It is believed that Sri Rama, Lakshmana, Sugreeva, Jambavan and Hanuman, before proceeding to Lanka, worshipped the Lord here and received Upadesa from Him. Hence the Lord is known as Mantrapuriswarar. Vinayaka here is known as Suta Vana Pillaiyar. It is said that Varuna also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sugreeva Tirtham.

249. POOVANUR

51 Km from Koilur via Muttupet and Mannargudi on way to Nidamangalam.

PUSHPAVANESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Pushpavaneswarar and the Goddess, Karpakavalli. It is said that Sukha Muni and other Rishis and the Devas worshipped the Lord here with flowers from plants specially grown by

them. Hence the Lord is known as Pushpavaneswarar. There is a sannidhi for Goddess Chamundeswari which is very famous. The tirth is known as Karpaka Tirtham.

250. KOILVENNI

10 Km from Poovanur via Nidamangalam on way to Thanjavur.

VENNI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Venninathar and the Goddess, Azhakiyanayaki. This is a Swayambhu Linga and looks like a bundle of sugar cane. It is said that Dattatreya Rishi and Muchukunda Chakravarti worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Azhagu Sivagangai Tirtham. There is no dwajastambham in the temple.

251. PARUDHIAPPAR KOIL

18 Km from Koilvenni via Ammapettai and Neyvasal.

PARUDHIAPPAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Parudhiappar and the Devi, Mangalanayaki. It is said that Suryadeva worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Bhaskara Tirtham.

252. AVALIVA NALLUR

19 Km from Parudhiapparkoil via Ammapettai.

SAKSHI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as

Sakshinathar and the Goddess, Soundaranayaki. It is said that Varaha Bhagwan worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Prasanna Tirtham.

253. HARIDWARA MANGALAM

3 Km from Avalivanallur.

PATALA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Patalanathar and the Goddess, Alankaranayaki. It is said that Mahavishnu returned to His original form here from His Varaha Avatar. The tirth is known as Patala Tirtham.

254. AVUR

12 Km from Haridwara Mangalam.

PASHUPATISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Pashupatiswarar and the Devi, Mangalanayaki. Dakshinamurti is very famous here. It is said that Indra, Kamadhenu and Sapta Rishis worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Pashu Tirtham.

255. NALLUR

4 Km from Avur on way to Papanasam.

PERIYAVANDAVAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Periyavandavar and the Devi, Parvatasundari. The Lingamurti is of golden colour and reflects five different colours during the day. It is

said that a Bramara (Vandu in Tamil) worshipped the Lord here and hence holes are seen on the Lingamurti. It is said that Sri Krishna, Vasudeva and the Pandavas also worshipped the Lord here. There is a vigraha of Vinayaka in Saligram which is considered very sacred. The tirth is known as Sapta Sagaram. Amaraneeti Nayanar attained moksha here. Tirunavukkarasu was blessed with sacred footwear by the Lord here.

256. PATTISWARAM

4 Km from Nallur.

PATTISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Pattiswarar and the Goddess, Palvalainayaki. It is believed that Patti, one of the four daughters of the celestial cow, Kamadhenu, worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Pattiswarar. It is said that the Lord asked Nandi to move a little aside for taking an obstruction-free view of Gnanasambandar, who was coming from a distance. Hence Nandi can be seen so placed before the Lord. The Lord gave a Pearl Pandal (Mani Mandapam) to Gnanasambandar. It is said that Sri Rama also worshipped the Lord here to get rid of His chayadosham due to the killing of Ravana and his hordes. There is a sannidhi for Vishnudurga. She is holding a conch and a chakra in Her hands, like Mahavishnu, therefore she is known as Vishnudurga and considered very powerful. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

257. TIRUSAKTIMUTTAM

1 Km from Pattiswaram.

SIVAKOZHUNDISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Sivakozhundiswarar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. There is a sannidhi for Kartigai Durga with six hands which is imposing and awe-inspiring. The tirth is known as Sakti Tirtham. The legend is that Devi Periyanayaki was in penance at this place for getting the pleasure of embracing and kissing the Lord. Pleased with the penance, the Lord appeared in the form of a terrifying fire and the Devi gladly embraced and kissed the Lord. This posture is depicted on the Gopuram. So this place has come to be known as Tirusaktimuttam (Tiru means sacred, Sakti means Goddess and Muttham means kiss.)

258. PALAIYUR

4 Km from Tirusaktimuttam via Pattiswaram.

SOMA NATHAR TEMPLE (MADAKKOIL)

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Somanathar and the Goddess, Somakalainayaki. It is said that Soma (Chandra) worshipped the Lord here and hence the Lord is known as Somanathar. The tirth is known as Chandra Pushkarini. Amaraneeti Nayanar lived in this place

259. DARASURAM

5 Km from Palaiyur via Pattiswaram.

IRAWATESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Irawateswarar and the Devi, Devanayaki. It is said that the celestial elephant, Irawata, worshipped the Lord here hence the Lord is known as Irawateswarar. The tank here is believed to have been caused by the Lord with His Trishul which is held very sacred. Yama (God of Death), who was suffering from a burning sensation all over his body, due to a curse of a Rishi, took a bath here and got rid of the curse. Since then, this tank is known as Yama Tirtham.The images of the 63 Nayanmars are carved in stone which is a feature here.

260. TIRUVALAMCHULI

3 Km from Darasuram .

SWETAVINAYAKAR TEMPLE

Lord Vinayaka here is known as Sweta Vinayakar. According to the legend, the devas forgot to worship Lord Vinayaka before commencing with the churning of the ocean for amritam and hence they got poison instead of nectar. On realising the omission, the devas made an image of Vinayaka out of the foam of the sea and worshiped Him. Indra carried this idol to Indraloka and brought it with him when he came on a pilgrimage to worship Lord Siva in this temple. When leaving, Indra found that the idol became immoveable, so he had to instal the Vinayaka here. Since the idol was made out of the foam of the sea, it is white in colour and therefore called

Sweta Vinayaka. As His tusk is turned rightward, He is also known as Valam Chuli Vinayaka and the place Tiruvalamchuli, meaning Tiru (Sacred), valam (Rightward), Chuli (Turned). Lord Siva, the principal deity here, is known as Kapardiswarar and the Goddess, Periyanayaki. There is also a sannidhi for Ashthabhuja Mahakali. A noteworthy feature here is the absence of the Navagrahas.

261. SWAMIMALAI

2 Km from Tiruvalamchuli.

SWAMI NATHAR TEMPLE

This temple is built on an artificial hillock. This is one of the Six Celestial Abodes of Lord Subramanya. There are 60 steps leading to the sanctum, each step said to be representing a year by name of the 60 years under the Tamil (Hindu) Calendar. The presiding deity here is known as Swaminathar as He takes on the role of Guru (Swami) to His Father, Lord Siva, to impart to Him (the latter) the meaning of the divine Pranava Mantra. Lord Subramanya is also seen here separately as Sabhapati, with Devi Deivayanai. This is the only place where He can be seen with Deivayanai alone. Another feature of this temple is the Elephant, in front of Swaminathar, instead of the usual Peacock. The story is that Indra, in token of his gratitude towards Subramanya, placed his Elephant before the Lord. There is a shrine for Vinayaka popularly called Netra Vinayakar (Kann Kodutha Vinayakar). It is said that a blind man, who worshipped this Vinayaka, was blessed with eye-sight. There are sannidhis for Lord Siva known as Sundareswarar and for the Goddess known as Meenakshi.

262. KOTTAIYUR

4 Km from Swamimalai on way to Kumbakonam.

KOTISWARA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kotiswaranathar and the Goddess, Panthadunayaki. It is believed that Markandeya worshipped the Lord here. It is said that the Lord gave darshan to Chola King and showed him a crore of lingas in one linga. Hence the Lord is known as Kotiswaranathar. Many Lingas can be seen in the Lingamurti here. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

263. INNAMBUR

4 Km from Kottaiyur

AKSHARA PURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Aksharapuriswarar (Ezhutharinthanathar) and the Goddess, Poomkombunayaki. The sannidhi of Devi Nityakalyani is also here. It is said that Agastya Maharishi worshipped the Lord here and learnt Literature from Him. Hence the Lord is known as Aksharapuriswarar. The tirth is known as Siva Pushkarini.

264. TIRUPURAMBIYAM

3 Km from Innambur.

SAKSHI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Sakshinathar and the Goddess, Karumbannasollammai. The Lord stood witness for the marriage of a Chetty couple who were His devotees and hence He is called Sakshinathar.

The image of Vinayaka in this temple is composed of oyster shells which absorbs a large quantity of honey during abhishekam and therefore called Pralaya Vinayaka. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

265. TIRU VIJAYA MANGAI

4 Km from Tirupurambiyam.

VIJAYA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vijayanathar and the Goddess, Mangalanayaki. It is said that Arjuna worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Arjuna Tirtham.

266. TIRUVAIKAVUR

3 Km from Tiruvijayamangai.

VILVAVANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vilvavananathar and the Goddess, Valaikkainayaki. Here the Lord turned to kill a demon called Eyama, so Nandi also changed his position. The Lord also gave moksha to a hunter. The story is that a hunter, fearing a tiger, took refuge on a Vilva tree and spent the night plucking the leaves and dropping them down, one by one, which fell on this Linga below the tree. It amounted to worshipping the Lord. As that day happened to be a Sivaratri day and the hunter passed the night awake, and without food, the Lord was pleased and gave him moksha. The tirth is known as Kootruva Tirtham.

267. TIRUPPALAITHURAI

15 Km from Tiruvaikavur via Papanasam.

PALAIVANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Palaivananathar and the Goddess, Thavalavennakaiyal. The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very important here. It is said that the tiger sent by the rishis of Darukavanam was killed here and its skin worn by the Lord. It is also said that Brahma and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham.

268. TIRUKARUGAVUR

8 Km from Tiruppalaithurai via Papanasam.

MULLAIVANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Mullaivananathar and the Devi, Karumpannanayaki (Garbharakshambika). The Goddess is specially worshipped here by women for conception as well as for safe delivery of child. It is said that Chandra (Moon) worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Arpuda Tirtham.

269. CHAKKARAPALLI

13 Km from Tirukarugavur via Papanasam and Ayyampettai.

CHAKARA VAGISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Chakaravagiswarar and the Goddess, Palvalainayaki. It is said that Brahma, Jayanta and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The River Kaveri is the tirtham here.

270. PULLAMANGAI

1 Km from Chakkarapalli.

ALAN THARITHA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Alantharithanathar and the Goddess, Alliyankothai.The Lord drank the Halahala (poison) and hence He is known as Alantharithanathar. It is said that the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Siva Tirtham.

271. TIRUCHOTTUTHURAI

11 Km from Pullamangai on way to Kandiyur.

THOLAIYA CHELVA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Tholaiyachelvanathar and the Goddess, Oppillambikai. It is said that Indra worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Surya Tirtham. It is also said that the Lord graced Arulalan, a devotee, with cooked rice (Choru) .

272. TIRUVEDIKUDI

3 Km from Tiruchottuthurai.

VEDAPURI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vedapurinathar and the Goddess, Mangayarkarasi. It is said that the Vedas and Kubera worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sundara Tirtham.

273. KANDIYUR

3 Km from Tiruvedikudi.

VEERATTESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Ashta Veerattana Kshetras of Lord

Siva. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Veeratteswarar and the Goddess, Mangalanayaki.The sannidhi is facing west This is the place where Lord Siva plucked the fifth head of Brahma and blessed him back. There is also a sannidhi for Brahma. The River Kaveri is the tirtham here.

274. THITTAI (TIRUTENKUDI)

8 Km from of Kandiyur.

VASISHTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vasishtheswarar and the Goddess, Ulaganayaki. It is said that Kamadhenu, Goutama Rishi and Adi Sesha worshipped the Lord here. Brihaspati (Jupiter) has got a separate sannidhi here. The tirth is known as Pashu Tirtham.

275. THANJAVUR

9 Km fromThittai.

BRIHADISWARAR TEMPLE

This is a very big and historically famous temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Brihadiswarar and the Goddess, Brihannayaki. The Lord is said to have ordained the king, Raja Raja Chola, in a dream to get the Sivalingam from the Narmada river and build a temple. The Linga when taken out of the river started growing. That is why the Lord is known as Brihadiswarar. This Lingamurti is the grandest in existence. The beauty of the tilak and the purity of the white cloth on the Lingam are unparallelled. The temple is built like a fort with 18 feet high walls and 15 feet deep moat. The striking thing is the Vimanam over the grabhagriham. It rises, in stately proportions, to a height of 216 feet with 14 tiers in between. There is a massive single piece stone dome of 80 tons at the top. It is said that this huge block of stone was

carried to the immense height on an inclined plane about 6 Km long, specially built for the purpose. The kalasam above the dome is 12½ feet.high The remarkable feature is that the shadow of the Vimanam does not fall on the ground during any part of the day. How, in such distant past, a feat of such magnitude was achieved with such engineering skill and perfection is really a matter of wonder. May be it was due to the faith of the great king and the skill of the artisans of those days and also the blessing of the Lord that such great feats apparently impossible became easy One could see in niches on the four walls of the central shrine sculptures of rare workmanship. The figure of Nataraja is a piece of art. There is a sannidhi for Subramanya which is considered an exquisite piece of decorative art. The portals of the temple are guarded by huge dwarapalakas of18 feet high, each made of a single stone. The Nandi here is massive and striking, said to be the second biggest in India, the first being that at the Lepakshi Temple in Andhra. The Navagraha murtis are in the shape of Lingas. In the outer corridors adjoining the sanctum is a shrine for Jwarahareswarar. It is believed that sandal paste ablution offered to the deity helps to bring down fever. There is an art gallery also here of the Hindu Gods and Goddesses

276. TIRUPUNTURUTHI

14 Km from Thanjavur via Kandiyur on way to Tirukattuppalli.

PUSHPA VANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Pushpavananathar and the Devi, Azhakarnthanayaki. It is said that the Gandharvas grew a flower garden here for the Lord and worshipped Him with the flowers. Hence the Lord is known as Pushpavananathar. The River Kaveri is the tirth here.

277. TIRUVALAMPOZHILI

2 Km from Tirupunturuthi.

ATMA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Atmanathar and the Devi, Gnanambikai The sannidhi is facing west. It is said Ashtavasus and Nagaraja worshipped the Lord here. The River Kaveri is the tirth here.

278. TIRUKATTUPPALLI

12 Km from Tiruvalampozhili.

THEEYADI APPAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Theeyadiappar and the Goddess, Varkondamulaiammai. It is said that Suryadeva and Agnideva worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Agni Tirtham.

279. TIRUKKANUR

4 Km from Tirukattuppalli via Vishnampettai.

SEMMENI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is knwon as Semmeninathar and the Goddess, Sivayoganayaki. It is believed that Devi Parvati did penance here and the Lord appeared in His Jyoti Swaroop. It is.said that Vedas also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Veda Tirtham. This temple was found 150 years ago under the sand.

280. TILLAITHANAM (TIRUNEITHANAM)

18 Km from Tirukkanur via Vishnampettai on way to Tiruvaiyaru.

NEYYADI APPAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Neyyadiappar and the Devi, Valambikai. It is said that Saraswati worshipped the Lord here. The River Kaveri is the tirth here. Dakshinamurti here is in a standing posture which is very rare.

281. TIRUPPERUMPULIYUR

1 Km from Tillaithanam.

VYAGHRAPURI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vyaghrapurinathar and the Devi, Soundaranayaki.It is said that Vyaghrapada Rishi worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Vyaghrapurinathar. The peetham for the Lord looks like a Lotus. The tirth is known as Vyaghra Tirtham.

282. TIRUVAIYARU

3 Km from Tirupperumpuliyur via Tillaithanam.

CHEMPORCHOTHI NATHAR TEMPLE

This is one of the six kshetras considered equal to Kashi.This temple is very big with matchingly high gopurams on all sides. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Chemporchothinathar and the Goddess, Aramvalarthanayaki (Dharmasamvardhani). The sannidhi of the Goddess is also very important here. The Lord arrested the flood here for Sundaramurti Nayanar to cross the river. A bath in the River Kaveri here on Adi Amavasya day (Ashada Month) is considered very sacred. It is said that the Lord gave the vision to Appar to see Kailas from this place. The famous Karnatic music composer, Saint Tyagaraja, lived and attained moksha here.

283.TIRUPPAZHANAM

3 Km from Tiruvaiyaru on way to Kumbakonam.

AAPAT SAHAY ESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Aapatsahayeswarar and the Devi, Periyanayaki. There is also a sannidhi for Venugopalaswamy. It is said that Dikpalakas worshipped the Lord here. At this place, Appoodhi Adigal's son, who died of a snake bite, was brought back to life by Appar by singing hymns on the Lord. The tirth is known as Mangala Tirtham.

284. VADAKURANGADUTHURAI

8 Km from Tiruppazhanam on way to Kumbakonam.

KULAI VANANGU NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kulaivanangunathar and the Devi, Azhagusadaimudiyal. It is said that Vali, the monkey chief, worshipped the Lord here. There are also shrines for Nataraja and Sivakami, which are considered very important. The tirth is known as Vali Tirtham.

285. KILAPALUR

29 Km from Vadakurangaduthurai via Tiruvaiyaru on way to Ariyalur.

VADA MOOLA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Vadamoolanathar and the Devi, Arunthavanayaki. It is said that here the Lord killed Suyasura who came in the guise of an elephant. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

286. TIRUMAZHAPADI

41 Km from Kilapalur via Pullambadi.

VAJRA STHAMBH ESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Vajrasthambheswarar and the Goddess, Azhagambikai. It is said that Indra worshipped the Lord here. The River Kollidam is the tirth here. The marriage festival of Nandikeswarar is held here every year in the Tamil month Panguni (March/April).

287. LALGUDI

30 Km from Tirumazhapadi via Pullambadi.

SAPTA RISHISWARAR TEMPLE

This is a big temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Saptarishiswarar and the Devi, Dharmarakshambika. The sannidhi is facing west. It is said that Saptarishis worshipped the Lord here, hence the Lord is known as Saptarishiswarar. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

288. ANBIL

8 Km from Lalgudi.

ALANTHURAYEESANAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Alanthurayeesanar and the Goddess, Soundaranayaki. Brahma worshipped the Lord here. Ganapati here is seen in a slanting position. It is said that when the river was in spate Appar could not cross the river and from the other bank he sang hymns on the Lord and Ganapati slanted to hear him. The tirth is known as Gayatri Tirtham.

289. TIRUMANGALAM

12 Km from Anbil via Lalgudi.

SAMA VEDESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Samavedeswarar and the Devi, Lokanayaki. It is said that Parashurama worshipped the Lord here. Ana Nayanar attained moksha here.

290. MANTHURAI

4 Km from Tirumangalam.

AMPIRA VANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Ampiravananathar and the Goddess, Azhakambikai. It is said that Maharishi Kanva worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Maha Tirtham.

291. SAMAYAPURAM

17 Km from Manthurai.

MARIAMMAN TEMPLE

This is a very famous temple . The presiding deity is known as Mariamman. It is said, originally, the Goddess was in Srirangam Temple. The Jeer Swamis found the deity of a very fierce nature and shifted Her to this place. Any prarthana made here is believed to be fulfilled by the Goddess.

292. TIRUPPAINJILI

9 Km from Samayapuram via Manachanallur.

NEELA KANTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Neelakantheswarar and the Goddess, Visalakshi. There is also a sannidhi for Yama. It is said that the Devas and Bhoomidevi did penance here in the form of plantain trees

for restoring the life of Yama(God of Death) to lighten the burden of the earth on Bhoomidevi. The Lord, pleased with the penance, restored the life of Yama. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

293. TIRUVASI

12 Km from Tiruppainjili via Manachanallur.

MATRARI VARADAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Matrarivaradar and the Goddess, Balasundari. Here Nataraja has a serpent under His feet in place of Muyalaka and hence He is known as Sarpa Natana Murti. The tirth is known as Aranya Tirtham.

294. UTTAMARKOIL

4 Km from Tiruvasi on way to Tiruvanaikkaval.

BIKSHATANESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Bikshataneswarar and the Goddess, Parvati. This is a Trimurti Kshetra having separate sannidhis for Lord Siva, Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma and hence considered very important.

295. TIRUVANAIKKAVAL

6 Km from Uttamarkoil.

JAMBUKESWARAR TEMPLE

This is one of the Pancha Bhoota Kshetras and represents Appu (Water) and therefore known as Appu Kshetra. This is a very big and famous temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Jambukeswarar and His consort, Akhilandeswari. Devi Parvati came to this place and made a linga out of water particles and worshipped it. So, the

Lingam is known as Appulingam.The Lingamurti is below the ground level and always lapped in water.The fact that the Devi worshipped the Lord here is even now remembered by the priest of the Devi temple daily dressed in woman's attire going to the temple of the Lord during the mid day puja. The sannidhi of the Lord is facing west and that of the Devi is facing east, as it is said that Devi took here Upadesa from the Lord. This is one of the Saktipeethas. Adi Sankara worshipped the Goddess by adorning Her with earrings bearing the symbol of the Chakra. There is also a sannidhi for Adi Sankara . The River Kaveri is the tirth here. According to a legend, a saint swallowed a Jambu fruit with its seed after offering it to Lord Siva. The seed sprouted and grew into a tree in the very body of the saint. He then prayed to the Lord who took his place as a Linga under the tree giving moksham to the saint. Hence the Lord came to be known as Jambukeswarar. According to another legend, two attendants of Lord Siva, Pushpadanta and Malyava who were under a curse were born here as an elephant and a spider respectively and they worshipped the Linga simultaneously. Everyday the spider would weave a web over the Lingam to shelter it from falling leaves. The elephant would bring water in its trunk and bathe the Lingam and tear away the spider's web since he thought the web was a hindrance to his puja. The infuriated spider entered the elephant's trunk and stung it. The elephant died of pain and in that process the spider too fell dead. The Lord was pleased with their devotion and granted them salvation. The spider took re-birth as a Chola king, who built this temple. There is also a legend about the erection of the outer most prakaram. It is said that Lord Siva himself came as a Siddhar and employed thousands of labourers for the purpose. The labourers were given pinches of sacred ash for the work done by them, which turned into gold afterwards. He also performed many miracles and at last disappeared. So this wall is known as Vibhuti Wall and one who goes round this prakaram in the clock-wise direction is blessed with children and gets all of his desires fulfilled.

296. TIRUPPATHURAI

11 Km from Tiruvanaikkaval.

TIRUMOOLA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Tirumoolanathar and the Goddess, Mohanayaki. It is said that, when Markandeya was in sorrow for not getting milk for abhishekam, the Lord graced him with profuse milk. The River Kollidam is the tirth here.

297. TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

17 Km from Tiruppathurai via Tiruvanaikkaval.

ROCKFORT TEMPLE

Rock Fort is a hill, 273 ft. high, situated in the heart of the city, it is said to be one of the three 'chips' blown off the Mount Meru by Vayu (God of Wind). The other two 'chips' fell at Srikalahasti (in A.P.) and Tiruconmalee (in Ceylon) respectively. The Rock looks like a huge sitting bull and hence called Rishabhachalam. It is also known as Dakshin Kailas. There is a shrine at the foot of the hill for Manicka Vinayakar.

Tayumanavaswamy Temple is on way up the hill. One has to climb 245 steps to reach the sanctum. The presiding deity is known as Tayumanavaswamy and the Goddess, Sugandakunthalambikai. The legend is that a pious lady was in labour. Her mother who was to come from a distant village could not come due to the River Kaveri being in spate. Lord Siva took the form of the mother and attended on the pious lady. Later, when the real mother came, the Lord disappeared. So, the Lord came to be known as Tayumanavar, a term in Tamil meaning 'Mother also (Tayum) He became (Anavar). Sri Rama, Hanuman and Trisarasura worshipped the Lord here. The River Kaveri is the tirth here.

Uchipillaiyar Temple is situated on the top of the hill, 172 steps from the Tayumanavaswamy Temple. The deity is Lord Vinayaka. He is called here as Uchipillaiyar, a Tamil term meaning Vinayaka of the Summit. The legend is that Vibhishana, while on way back to Lanka from Ayodhya, was carrying an idol of Ranganathaswamy presented to him by Sri Rama. He broke journey here for performing some religious rites at the Kaveri and entrusted the idol to a brahmin lad who happened to be there. He also instructed him that the idol should not be placed on the ground for any reason. The boy who, in fact, was Vinayaka Himself in disguise, placed the idol on the ground. Vibhishana returned only to find that the image, placed on the ground, could not be lifted and became angry. The boy ran up to the summit of the hill. Vibhishana chased him and hit him on the head. Then the boy transformed himself as Vinayaka. A dent on the Vinayaka's forehead can be seen.

298. URAIYUR

2 Km from Tiruchirappalli.

PANCHA VARNESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Panchavarneswarar because the Lingamurti radiates five different colours in a day as, it is said, Brahma worships the Lord here five times daily and the Lord gives darshan to him in different colours. The Goddess is known as Kantimatinayaki. It is said that Udhayanka Maharishi also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Kudamurutti Tirtham.

299. KARKUDI

6 Km from Uraiyur on way to Kumaravayalur.

UCHI VANESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated on a hillock. The Lord dwelling

in this temple is known as Uchivaneswarar and the Goddess, Anjanakshi.The sannidhi is facing west. There is also a sannidhi for Devi Balambikai. It is said that Kharasura and Markandeya worshipped the Lord here. The King of Ceylon also worshipped the Lord here and attained moksha. The tirth is known as Moksha Tirtham.

300. KUMARA VAYALUR

3 Km from Karkudi.

ADI NATHAR TEMPLE

This is an ancient temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Adinathar and the Goddess, Adinayaki. The Nataraja Murti is very famous here. He has a crown on His head instead of the usual Jatamudi and the asura under His feet is also not seen. Hence it is known as Sundara Tandava Murti. The tirth is known as Sakti Tirtham which is said to have been caused by Lord Subramanya by His Vel (Spear). Lord Subramanya, here known as Kumaraswamy, with His consorts Valli and Deivayanai, is in the posture of worshipping Lord Siva.

301. TIRUVERUMBUR

17 Km from Kumara Vayalur via Tiruchirappalli.

ERUMBISWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated on a hillock. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Erumbiswarar and the Goddess, Narunkulalnayaki. The Lingamurti is slightly slanting northward.It is said that the Devas, fearing asuras, took the form of erumbu (ant) and worshipped the Lord here. Hence the Lord is known as Erumbiswarar. Kharasura and Dooshana also worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Arpuda Tirtham.

302. TIRUNEDUNKALAM

10 Km from Tiruverumbur.

NITYA SUNDARESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Nitya Sundareswarar and the Goddess, Oppillanayaki. Dakshinamurti is sitting with both legs folded, which is very rare. The Lord gave darshan to King Vangiya Chola. It is said that Agastya Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Agastya Tirtham.

303. TIRUPPARAITHURAI

36 Km from Tirunedunkalam via Tiruchirappalli on way to Kulitalai.

PARAI THURAI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Paraithurainathar and the Goddess, Ponmayilambikai. It is said that Indra, Kubera and Sapta Rishis worshipped the Lord here. The Lord gave darshan to the rishis in Bikshandavar roopam. The River Kaveri is the tirtham here and a bath in it in the month of Thula is considered very sacred. The Ramakrishna Kuthir in this place is worth visiting.

304. ENGOIMALAI

21 Km from Tirupparaithurai via Kulitalai.

MARAGATHA CHALESWARAR TEMPLE

The temple is situated on a hill top. There are 500 steps to be climbed to reach the sanctum. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Maragathachaleswarar and the Goddess, Maragathavalli. It is said that Sage Agastya worshipped the Lord here in the form of a fly (engoi). Hence

the hill is known as Engoimalai. The tirth is known as Agastya Tirtham.

305. KULITALAI

4 Km from Engoimalai.

KADAMBA VANA NATHAR TEMPLE

This is the only temple in the south which is facing north. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kadambavananathar and the Goddess, Mutrilamulaiammai. It is said that the Lord gave darshan to Kanva Rishi in the form of a tree. The tirth is known as Gnana Tirtham.

306. RATNAGIRI

12 Km from Kulitalai

RATNAGIRISWARAR TEMPLE

The temple is situated on a hilltop. There are 952 steps to be climbed to reach the sanctum with resting platforms on the way to ease the strain. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ratnagiriswarar and the Goddess, Surumbarkulali. The sannidhi is facing west. Darshan of the Lord at noon is a feature. A story connected with this temple is that a king worshipped the Lord here for getting precious stones. The Lord appeared and put a condition that he should fill the temple tank with water. The king started filling the tank but it was not getting filled. This annoyed the king. He struck the Linga with his sword. The Lord appeared and gave the ratna to him. Hence the Lord is known as Ratnagiriswarar. The mark of the sword on the Lingamurti can be seen. Hence the place is also known as Tiruvatpokki. Another story is that once a bhakta was carrying milk for abhishekam. As a crow made the milk impure, he gave a curse and due to this curse no crow sits on this hill. The tirth is known as Gouri Tirtham.

307. KARUR

53 Km from Ratnagiri via Kulitalai.

PASHUPATISWARAR TEMPLE (ANILAI TEMPLE)

This is a big and very famous temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Pashupatiswarar and the Goddess, Krupanayaki. The Lingamurti is in a slanted position. There is also a sannidhi for Kantimati Amman. It is said that Kamadhenu worshipped the Lord here and the Lord gave the power of creation to her when Brahma was asleep. Eripattha Nayanar and Sivakami Andar lived here. Karuvoor Thevar attained moksha here.

308. KODUMUDI

27 Km from Karur.

KODU MUDI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kodumudinathar and the Goddess, Panmozhiyal. It is said that Brahma and Vishnu worshipped the Lord here. There is also a sannidhi for Brahma. The River Noyyal is the tirth here.

309. BHAVANI

51 Km from Kodumudi via Erode.

SANGAMESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Sangameswarar and the Goddess, Vedamangai. There is a sannidhi for Adikeshavaperumal. Rishi Parasara and the Devas worshipped the Lord here. The sangam of the three rivers, Bhavani, Kaveri and Amuda, known as Antarvahini, is considered very sacred.

310. TIRUCHENGODU

36 Km from Bhavani.

ARDHA NARISWARAR TEMPLE

This famous temple is situated on a hill. There are 1200 steps tobe climbed to reach the sanctum, with resting platforms on the way to ease the strain. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ardhanariswarar and the Goddess, Bagampiriyalammai. Devi Parvati worshipped the Lord and became the half portion of Lord Siva. Hence the Lord is known as Ardhanariswarar. The murti in the sanctum is a swayambhu vigraha. The water is always oozing out of the feet of the Lord which is given as prasadam to devotees. A maragathaLinga isworshipped daily and shown to devotees. There is a mandap in front of the main sannidhi and its wall has nine holes through which one can see the main shrine. It is said that once in a year for 3 days the rays of the sun fall on the feet of the Lord through all the nine holes. There is a sannidhi for Adikeshava Perumal. It is said that Singavarmasura worshipped the Lord here and got rid of his tiger form. The tirth is known as Brahma Tirtham. The sannidhi of Subramanya known as Tiruchengodu Velavan is very famous here. There is also a sannidhi for Kailasanathar at the foot of the hill.

311. TIRUVENCHAMAKKOODAL

86 Km from Tiruchengodu via Karur on way to Vedasandur.

VIKKIRTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Vikkirtheswarar and the Devi, Vikkirtheswari. It is said that an asura by name Venchan worshipped the Lord here and hence the name of the place is Tiruvenchamakkoodal. It is said that Indra also worshipped the Lord here. The Veganadi is considered to be the tirtham here.

312. PALANI

97 Km from Tiruvenchamakkoodal via Vedasandur.

DANDAYUDHA PANI SWAMY TEMPLE

This is a very famous temple for Lord Muruga situated at the top of a hill 450 feet high with a convenient flight of steps and mechanised winch to reach the top. The presiding deity, Dandayudhapaniswamy, appears as an ascetic (sadhu) who has renounced all wordly attachments. The idol is composed of navapashanam, an amalgam of nine medicinal minerals. Any substance coming in contact with the image is believed to acquire miraculous healing powers. The idol is in a standing posture with a dandam (staff) in the right hand. The legend is that Lord Siva showed a rare fruit to Ganesa and Muruga and offered it as a prize to him who went round the universe and came out first. Whereupon, Muruga set out on his peacock, while Ganesa stayed back and made a pradakshina of His parents explaining that the universe was within them. Lord Siva, pleased, gave the fruit to Ganesa. Muruga, returning after literally going round the Universe, was annoyed to learn all this and came here wearing only a loincloth and with a staff in hand. Devotees throng here and carry kavadis on their shoulders to propitiate the Lord. The legend behind the origin of Kavadi is that once Lord Siva gave Sage Agastya two hills, Sivagiri and Saktigiri, to be installed in the south. The sage entrusted the task to his disciple, Idumban, a demon. Idumban carried the hills on his shoulders slung one at each end to a pole, in the form called 'Kavadi'. On the way he placed them on the ground here and took rest. At that time, Subramanya, after quarrelling with His parents over the fruit, came to dwell here and stood on one of the hills. Idumban then could not lift it and fought with Him. The asura was knocked down and, on the request of his wife, Subramanya restored Idumban to consciousness. Idumban

prayed that he be allowed to be the dwarapalaka. The same was granted and also that whoever offered vows with kavadi be blessed. This was how kavadis came to be carried at all sacred shrines of Lord Muruga. Idumban has a shrine at the entrance of the hill where every pilgrim offers obeisance. Devotees do Giripradakshinam, i.e. go around the hill, by foot. Tonsuring is also done by visiting piligrims. At the foot of the hill there is a temple dedicated to Lord Subramanya with His consorts, Valli and Deivayanai. This is one of the Arupadaiveedu (six celestial abodes of Lord Subramanya). The tirth is known as Saravana Poikai.

313. PIRANMALAI

118 Km from Palani via Dindigal, Nattam and Kottampatti.

KODUN KUNRESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kodunkunreswarar and the Goddess, Kuyilamudanayaki. It is said that Nagaraja and Mahodhara Rishi worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

314. TIRUPPATTUR

30 Km from Piranmalai.

PUTHUR NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Puthurnathar and the Goddess, Sivakami. The dance performed here by the Lord is known as Gowri Tandavam. It is said that Mahalakshmi and Uma Devi worshipped the Lord here. The sannidhi of Bhairava is considered very important here. The tirth is known as Arpuda Gangai.

315. AVUDAYAR KOIL

75 Km from Tiruppattur via Karaikudi and Arantangi.

ATMA NATHAR TEMPLE

This is a very big temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Atmanathar and the Goddess, Arupa Sakti. As the Lord is considered to be in Atmalinga form in this temple, there is only the platform in the sannidhi which is known as Avudayar. Hence the pujas are done only for the Avudayar. Manickavachakar got Panchakshara Upadesam from the Lord here. This famous temple which has sculptural splendours and architectural values, was built by Manickavachakar himself. There is a sannidhi for Manickavachakar and festivals are held for this murti only. It is said that Brahma, Rishis Parasara and Bhrigu worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Agni Tirtham. The unique feature is that there is no Dwajastambham, Nandi and Chandikeswara in this temple. Another marvel is that the sun's rays always fall on the sanctum in the evening hours although it is inside three prakarams.

316. TIRUPPUNAVAYIL

35 Km from Avudayarkoil.

PUNAVAYIL NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Punavayilnathar and His consort, Karunainayaki. The Lingamurti is very big like that at Brahadiswarar temple in Thanjavur. It is said that the four Vedas worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Ganga Tirtham.

317. TIRUVADANAI

20 Km from Tiruppunavayil.

RATNA NATHAR TEMPLE

This is a very big temple with a nine storeyed gopuram of rich architectural value. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ratnanathar and the Devi, Ambayiravalli.

According to a legend, Varuni, the son of Varunadeva was cursed by Sage Durvasa to be transformed into an elephant having the head of a goat. With the mouth of a goat, the body of an elephant could not be sustained. So, to get rid of the curse, Varuni came here and, after devoted prayer and penance, regained his original form. Hence the place is known as Tiruvadanai, i.e. Tiru (sacred) Adu (goat), Anai (Elephant). It is said that Saptakannikas and Rishi Vasu worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Ratna Tirtham. This place is also considered as a Sukra Kshetram. Hence devotees specially visit here for obtaining relief from the malefic effects of Sukra.

318. KALAIYAR KOIL

36 Km from Tiruvadanai.

KALAI APPAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kalaiappar and the Goddess, Magamayi. It is said that Lord Siva gave darshan to Sundaramurti Nayanar as a Kalai (Rishabham), hence the Lord is known as Kalaiappar. It is said that Kali, Lakshmi, Indra, Sandilya Rishi, Surya and Irawatam worshipped the Lord here. Sudarshana Chakram, the powerful weapon of Mahavishnu, regained its lustre after worshipping the Lord here. The tirth is known as Rishabha Tirtham.

319. DEVIPATTINAM

76 Km from Kalaiyar Koil via Tiruvadanai.

NAVAPASHANAM

It is said that Sri Rama installed the Navagrahas in the form of 9 stone pillars (Pashanam) and hence they are known as Navapashanam. The stone pillars are installed at the sea shore and visible at low tide. Pilgrims worship the

Navagrahas here before going to Rameswaram. Ulagamman and Tilakeswarar Temples are worth seeing.

320. RAMESWARAM

75 Km from Devipattinam via Ramanathapuram and Mandapam.

RAMANATHASWAMY TEMPLE

This is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas and one of the four Dhams considered very sacred and universally worshipped by all sects. This temple of gigantic dimensions is a treasure of ancient art and architectural interests with its world famous extensive corridors. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ramanathaswamy and the Goddess, Parvatavardhini. The Goddess, with Srichakra, is enshrined in a sanctum to the right. The legend says that, on his return from Lanka, Sri Rama, to absolve himself of the sin of killing Ravana, wanted to install a Linga here and sent Hanuman to Mount Kailas for fetching a Linga. Hanuman failed to return in time. As the auspicious time was not to be lost, Sita made a Linga out of sand and Sri Rama installed it here which is known as Ramanathaswamy. When Hanuman returned with a linga, he was disappointed to see a Linga already there. Sri Rama, to pacify Hanuman, installed the Linga brought by him to the north of Ramanathaswamy and named it Viswanatha. All the pujas are first performed to Viswanatha and then only to Ramanathaswamy. Adjacent to Viswanatha is the shrine for His consort, Visalakshi. There is also a shrine for Lord Vishnu known as Setu Madhava. The Nandi at this temple is quite big and famous. The sea in front of the temple is considered the most sacred and is known as Agni Tirtham. There are 22 more tirthams in the different parts of the temple where one is supposed to take a dip. They are :

Sl.No.	Name of the Tirtham	Location
1.	Mahalakshmi	South of Hanuman Sannidhi
2.	Savitri	Hanuman Sannidhi
3.	Gayatri	
4.	Saraswati	
5.	Madhava	In the third prakaram
6.	Gandhamadana	
7.	Gavaksha	
8.	Gavaya	
9.	Nala	
10.	Neela	
11.	Sankha	In the second prakaram
12.	Chakra	
13.	Brahma	
14.	Surya	
15.	Chandra	
16.	Ganga	
17.	Yamuna	
18.	Gaya	
19.	Siva	Close to Nandi Mandapam
20.	Satyamrita	Near Navasakti Mandapam
21.	Sarva	
22.	Koti	

The importance of bathing in all the above tirthams derives from the belief that Sri Krishna Himself bathed in them. One should take bath or have prokshanam on the departure day from Rameswaram in the Koti Tirtham. About 3 Km from this temple is Gandhamadhana Parvatam. Sri Rama's Padukas are enshrined in a mandapam. A bird's eye

view of the entire Rameswaram Island can be had from this mandapam.

321. UTTARA KOSA MANGAI

77 Km from Mandapam via Ramanathapuram.

MANGALESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mangaleswarar and the Goddess, Mangaleswari. The Nataraja Murti here is made of a precious green stone and always covered with sandal paste. On the day of Arudra the paste is removed when the devotees are allowed to have a darshan. It is said that Sandilya Rishi and Ganga worshipped the Lord here. It is also said that the Lord gave darshan to Manickavachakar here. The tirth is known as Sivagangai Tirtham.

322. TIRUPUVANAM

123 Km from Uttarakosamangai via Paramakkudi and Manamadurai.

POOVANA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Poovananathar and the Goddess, Minnambikai. It is said that the Lord converted base metals into gold in order to make the idol, for the sake of nine women devotees who prayed for such a miracle. Surya and Papuru Maharishi worshipped the Lord here. The River Vaigai is considered to be the tirtham here.

323. TIRUVADHAVUR

33 Km from Tirupuvanam via Melur.

VEDA PURISWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as

Vedapuriswarar and the Goddess, Elavar Kulali Ammai. It is said that Saint Manickavachakar was born here.

324. PAZHAMUDIRCHOLAI

20 Km from Tiruvadhavur via Melur and Alagarkoil.

PALAMUDIR CHOLAI MURUGAN TEMPLE

This famous temple is situated on a hill. There is a good ghat road to go to the temple. The presiding deity of this temple is Lord Subramanya. This is one of the six celestial abodes of Lord Muruga. The tirth is known as Noopura Ganga, situated about 1 Km from the temple.

325. MADURAI

23 Km from Pazhamudircholai. There are two important temples.

1. MEENAKSHI SUNDARESWARAR TEMPLE

This is a very famous and one of the biggest temples in South India. The temple is a standing monument to Dravidian art and culture. It has several gopurams, the tallest of them being the one over the southern gate measuring 160 feet. Usually visitors enter this temple by the east side gate where the famous Ashta Sakti mandapam is situated. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Sundareswarar and the Goddess, Meenakshi. This is a Swayambhulinga, said to have been worshipped by Indra. He found it under a kadamba tree and put up a vimanam over it. Later, when it was discovered that the Devas were worshipping it, a proper temple was built by Kulasekara Pandyan and additions were made over the years. Goddess Meenakshi, as the presiding deity, is worshipped first. Meenakshi is one of the three especially powerful Goddesses of India, the other two being Kamakshi of Kancheepuram and Visalakshi of Kashi. the legendary story is that Meenakshi incarnated Herself as a

Pandyan princess and wedded Lord Siva. Later, they both assumed their divine form in this temple. The wedding of Goddess Meenakshi with Lord Sundareswarar is celebrated every year with great devotion on Chaitra Poornima day. Alagar (Lord Vishnu), as brother of Parvati Devi, performs it. Moorti Nayanar attained moksham here. This is one of the Pancha Sabhas for Lord Nataraja and is known as Rajata Sabha (Velliambalam). But the peculiarity here is that Nataraja has his right leg lifted up instead of the usual left. The dance performed by the Lord here is known as Sandhya Tandavam. The Golden Lily tank (Potramaraikkulam) is very beautiful and is surrounded by a thousand pillared corridor from where one can view the Golden Vimanas of the inner shrines. The walls of the corridors also carry paintings of Siva Leelas. The musical pillars producing sapta swaras, the innumerable mandapams, the thousand-pillared hall and many other things are worth seeing.

2. APPANOOR NATHAR TEMPLE (TIRUVAPPANUR)

This temple is situated at about 2 Km from Meenakshi Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Appanoornathar and the Goddess, Ambikai. It is said that the Lord had given darshan to the Pandya King from the pole to which his horse was tied. Hence the Lord is known as Appan (Pole) Oor (Place) Nathar (Swamy). The tirth is known as Rishabha Tirtham.

326. TIRUVEDAGAM

21 Km from Madurai.

EDAGA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Edaganathar and the Goddess, Uma Devi. It is said that in a contest with the Jains at Madurai, the palm leaf let by the Jains on the water of the Vaigai River sank immediately, but

Gnanasambandar's palm leaf containing his songs on Lord Siva did not sink rather it floated against the stream. Brahma, Garuda and Adisesha worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Vaigai Tirtham.

327. TIRUPPARANKUNRAM

29 Km from Tiruvedagam via Madurai.

SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE

This is a cave temple and one of the six celestial abodes (Arupadai Veedu) of Lord Muruga. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Subramanyaswamy. It was here that Lord Muruga, after the victory over Soorapadman, married Deivayanai, daughter of Indra. The murti of Nakkeerar, the famous Tamil Poet, is also seen here standing with reverence. Lord Siva in this temple is known as Parangirinathar and the Goddess, Avudaiyammai. It is said that Lord Siva came here to receive the offering made by Sibi Chakravarti. Also there are images of Karpaka Vinayakar, Satyagirinathar, Durga and Vishnu. The tirth is known as Saravana Poikai.

328. TIRUSULIYAL

65 Km from Tirupparankunram via Madurai and Kariyapatti.

TIRU MENI NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Tirumeninathar and the Goddess, Thunaimalainayaki. It is said that the Lord gave darshan to Gautama Rishi in His wedding dress. The idol of Lord Nataraja is remarkable here. Surya, Devi Uma, Sattanathar, Bhoomi Devi and Arjuna worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Natrunai Tirtham. This is the birth place of Ramana Maharishi.

329. SANKARA NAYINAR KOIL

107 Km from Tirusuliyal via Aruppukkottai, Virudhunagar and Sivakasi.

SANKARA NARAYANAR KOIL

This is a famous temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Sankaranarayanar the right half of whom is Sankara and the left half is Narayana thereby stressing the oneness of Siva and Vishnu. As per the legend, Lord Siva gave darshan in this form to Goddess Gomatiamman as desired by Her for which She did penance. By another legend, two serpent kings, Sankha and Padma, had a controversy as to who was the superior between Hari and Hara. They were shown the Eternal Truth of Siva and Vishnu as being one and the same. Lord Siva, however, has a separate sannidhi, as usual, in the Linga form. Goddess Gomatiamman has also a shrine. She is considered to give relief from evil spirits and mental disturbances. The Sun's rays fall on the Sivalinga twice a year, in March and September. The gopuram of the temple is massive and said to be the second highest in South India. The tirth is known as Naga Sunai, which is believed to have been dug by the two serpent kings. The puthuman (ant-hill earth) is given to devotees as prasadam which is believed to cure incurable diseases.

330. TENKASI

45 Km from Sankaranayinarkoil via Puliyangudi.

KASHI VISWA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kashi Viswanathar and Goddess, Lokambikai. The legend about the origin of this temple states that Lord Viswanathar appeared in a dream to King Parakrama Pandyan and bade him to build a temple at Tenkasi. Accordingly, the King built

this temple. The holy River Ganges is believed to have appeared at the Kashi Kinaru (well) at the bidding of the Lord. The temple has 10 large sculptures carved with rare skill and craftsmanship at the entrance of the Lord's Sannidhi.

331. KUTRALAM

6 Km from Tenkasi.

KURUMPALA NATHAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kurumpalanathar and the Goddess, Kuzhalvaimozhiamman. It is said that this was originally a Vishnu temple but later transformed into a Siva temple by Sage Agastya by touching the murti. The impression of the hand can be seen on the Linga. This is one of the Pancha Sabhas for Lord Nataraja and is known as Chitra Sabha which is situated in the north of this temple. Nataraja here is in the form of a portrait and the dance performed by the Lord is known as Tripura Tandavam. The River Chitra is the tirtham here. The waterfalls here is very famous.

332. TIRUNELVELI

61 Km from Kutralam.

NELLAI APPAR KOIL

This is a very big and famous temple with high gopurams on all sides. There are very big and spacious prakarams. This is one of the Pancha Sabhas for Lord Nataraja and is known as Tamira Sabha. The dance performed here by the Lord is known as Muni Tandavam. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Nellaiappar and the Goddess, Kantimatinayaki. The legend is that a poor brahmin used to collect paddy from house to house for nivedhanam to the Lord. Once he had left the paddy in the temple precincts to dry and went to take bath. it started raining and he feared that his paddy would get wet. So, he

prayed to the Lord. The Lord saved the paddy by making the rain fall beyond the fence He caused to protect the paddy. Hence, the name of the place Tirunelveli (Tiru : sacred, Nel : paddy, Veli: fence). The Lord is also known as Venuvananathar from the legend that, when He took abode here, the Four Vedas stood around Him as bamboo trees providing shade. Hence the name Venuvananathar (Venu : bamboo, Vana : forest, Nathar : Lord). There is a mandapam with one thousand pillars. Another mandapam is called Vasanta Mandapam with 48 pillars. These pillars give out unique musical sounds when struck gently with a piece of wood or stone. The River Tambiraparani is the tirtham here. There is a sannidhi for Lord Subramanya with six heads.

333. TIRUCHENDUR

58 Km from Tirunelveli.

SUBRAMANYASWAMY TEMPLE

This is one of the six celestial abodes (Aarupadai Veedu) of Lord Muruga. The temple is builton rock near the sea-shore. The gopuram of the temple, 137 feet high, is on the western side. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Subramanyaswamy. It was here that Subramanya launched the attack on the demon, Surapadman, and his mighty army who encamped in the mid-ocean. The legend is that Surapadman, along with his brothers, Singhamukha and Taraka, subjected the Devas to extreme miseries. The Devas invoked Lord Siva's help for deliverance. Lord Siva deputed Shanmukha (Six-faced) to lead the army of the Devas. He fought the demon for six days and pierced him into two. the demon's body, thus split, took the forms of a cock and a peacock and they too were fought to a finish. On the prayer of the demon He gave Viswarupa Darshan to him and adopted the peacock as His permanent charger and the cock as His banner. After the battle, Shanmukha rested here as

Balasubramanya, with one head and four hands. In a separate shrine, He is seen with His two consorts, Valli and Deivayanai. A Sivalingam enshrined in the northern corner is said to have been worshipped by Lord Subramanya after the war with Surapadman. There is a sannidhi for Lord Vishnu. A bath at the sea is believed to confer spiritual benefits.The tirth is known as Nazhikkinaru . A smaller well within the larger Nazhikkinaru contains sweet water, though it is situated very close to the sea. This well is said to have been caused by Lord Subramanya with His 'vel' for His attendants to drink water from. Lord Subramanya here is famous for protecting His devotees from any kind of distress.

334. KULASEKARAPATTINAM

13 Km from Tiruchendur.

CHIDAMBARESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Chidambareswarar and the Goddess, Sivakamasundari. There is no Dwajastambham. According to the legend, two rich merchants who were great devotees of Lord Siva, were sailing in a vessel on the sea and wanted to reach Chidambaram on a particular festival day. But there was a huge storm and rain. The merchants were worried very much as they would not be able to reach Chidambaram and prayed to the Lord. Suddenly there was a voice telling them that there is a lime fruit on the sea and they should follow it. They found the lemon and as they followed it, the ship reached the shore at this place and they found the Murti of Nataraja there and were delighted with the grace of the Lord. Hence this temple was built here and the Lord came to be known as Chidambareswarar. There is another temple nearby, known as Kanchi Vijaya Katchi Konda Pandeeswaram Temple which is also worth visiting.

335. OVARI

25 Km from Kulasekarapattinam on way to Kanyakumari.

SWAYAMBHU LINGASWAMY TEMPLE

The temple is situated on the seashore. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Swayambhulingaswamy and the Goddess, Brahmasaktiamman.

336. KANYAKUMARI

60 Km from Ovari.

KANYAKUMARI TEMPLE

This famous temple, situated on the land's end at the confluence of three seas, is dedicated to the virgin goddess, Kanyakumari. The legend says that Banasura was giving troubles to the Devas. The Devas prayed to Lord Vishnu. He advised them to propitiate Parasakti as the demon had a boon that he could be killed only by a virgin. The Goddess, pleased with their penance, came to this place in the form of a virgin girl. Lord Siva at Suchindram, being attracted, wanted to marry Her. The Devas realising that the marriage would destroy the chances of annihilating Banasura, frustrated the marriage. Thereafter the Goddess decided to remain a virgin and killed the demon. The Goddess is facing east while the main entrance is through the north gate. The eastern gate of the temple always remains closed. There is an interesting story behind it. Once upon a time, this door stood open and the bright gem set on the nose of the Goddess was shedding its lustrous radiance so far and wide that by its sheer effulgence it swayed the ships away from their course. Being mistaken for the warning signal of the light house, a ship once floundered on the rocks. Due to this

reason, the gate is kept closed from that time. A bath at the confluence of the three seas is considered very sacred. The Vivekananda Rock and Mahatma Gandhi Memorial are also worth seeing.

337. SUCHINDRAM

11 Km from Kanyakumari on way to Nagercoil.

THANUMALAYAN TEMPLE

The temple is big and very famous. The gopuram of the temple is 134 feet high and is a marvel of a construction. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Thanumalayan. In Tamil, it means Thanu (Siva), Mal (Vishnu) and Ayan (Brahma), all the three of them are in a Lingam at the top, in the middle and at the bottom respectively. Hence it is known as Trimurti Kshetra. The Goddess is known as Dharmasamvardhini. The Lingamurti is covered with a golden kavacha except at the time of abhisheka. Lord Vishnu is in a separate shrine. It is said that Anasuya, the devoted wife of Sage Atri, was tested here for her chastity by Brahma, Vishnu and Siva and, when they disappeared, there sprouted three lingas at the spot, below a laurel tree. The tree and the lingas can be seen even today at the temple. The name of this place derives from Indra who is said to have been purified here of his sin (Suchi means purify; Suchindra means Indra was purified). It is believed that Indra still comes to this temple and worships the Lord at midnight. An attraction here is the 18 ft high image of Hanuman remarkably depicting his humility and devotion. The navagraha murtis with their zodiacal signs on the ceiling of a mandapam are also worth seeing. Also interesting are the musical pillars and other exquisitely carved sculptures.

338. NAGERCOIL

8 Km from Suchindram.

NAGARAJA TEMPLE

The presiding deity is a five headed serpent known as Nagaraja. The sanctum of this temple is surrounded by mud walls and has a simple thatched roofing. The mud scooped out from the ground, where the deity is enshrined, is given as Prasadam to the devotees which is considered to cure various ailments. There are separate sannidhis for Lord Anantakrishna and Siva within this temple. The legend says that while harvesting the crops, the sickle of a farmer hit a granite stone and blood oozed out from the stone. It was established later to be Vasuki, the serpent king, and this temple was built at the spot. It is said that many serpents live all round the temple, but there has been no fatal case of snakebite.

339. TRIVANDRUM

60 Km from Nagercoil. There are two important temples.

1. KANTESWARAR TEMPLE

This is a big and important temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Kanteswarar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhulinga.

2. AATHUKKAL BHAGAVATI TEMPLE

The presiding deity of this temple is known as Aathukkal Bhagavati and considered very powerful. Fire cracker worship is very important here.

340. OCHIRA

109 Km from Trivandrum.

MAHADEVA TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mahadeva and the Goddess, Devi Parvati.

341. HARIPAD

19 Km from Ochira.

SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Subramanya Swamy. The deity with four arms is the biggest of the kind in Kerala. The deity is believed to have been originally worshipped by Parashurama. Legend says that a man had a dream that there was an image of Subramanya lying on a river bed. In the morning the image was taken out and enshrined in this temple. The Kavadi is the most important offering here.

342. KANDIYUR

23 Km from Haripad.

KANTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Kantheswarar and the Goddess, Bhuvaneswari. It is said that Mrigandu Maharishi installed this Linga and worshipped the Lord here.

343. MANNAR KORATTIKADU

6 Km from Kandiyur towards Chengannur.

MAHADEVA TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mahadeva and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that Vasishtha Maharishi worshipped the lord here and the Lord gave darshan to him. There is also a sannidhi for Lord Krishna.

344. CHENGANNUR

10 Km from Mannar Korattikadu.

CHENGANNUR BHAGAVATI TEMPLE

The temple is dedicated to both Parvati (facing west) and Parameswarar (facing east), but it is more famous for the Goddess. The legend says that Sage Agastya wanted to attend the marriage of Lord Siva with Devi Parvati at Kailash. But the Lord directed him to go to South where He will come with His consort. True to His word, the Lord came and while here the Devi had her menses. The divine couple therefore stayed here for twentyeight days after the purificatory bath. Even today the deity, which is cast in panchaloha, gets her periods. The yoni mandala of Sati is believed to have fallen here which perhaps explains the phenomenon why the Devi gets her monthly periods here. The tirth is known as Saktikunda Tirtham.

345. SABARIMALA

65 Km from Chengannur upto Chalakayam via Pathanamthitta. From Chalakayam, further 8 Km to be covered by foot only. As the temple is situated deep in the hilly tracts, the pilgrimage is done in groups. The temple is open only during certain periods of the year. Women and girls who have attained puberty are not allowed to visit this temple.

AYYAPPA TEMPLE

This is one of the most important and popular temples of Kerala. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Ayyappa (Sastha). The sanctum, which is on a raised ground, is called Srikoil. It can be reached by climbing 18 steps. The climbing down of the steps is done backward, that is, facing the Lord. The story of Ayyappa is depicted in the legend of killing the demoness, Mahishi. She had a boon that she would not be killed by anyone other than the one born

by the union of Siva and Vishnu and who has lived on the earth as a human for twelve years. Accordingly, Ayyappa was born by the union of Siva and Vishnu when the latter appeared as Mohini at the time of the churning of the ocean. Thus He is also called Hariharaputra - Son of Vishnu (Hari) and Siva (Hara). Now, this legend of Ayyappa is mingled with history. The child (Ayyappa) was found on the bank of the Pampa River by the local king. He had no child of his own and took him to his palace and brought him up as his own. The boy was named Manikantha because of the golden bell found on his neck. The king declared that Manikantha would be crowned king after him. In the meantime, the queen bore a child and, on the advise of the wicked minister, wanted her child to become the next king. They together planned to end the life of Manikantha and, according to the plan, the queen feigned some illness and her physician was bribed to say that one of the ingredients for the preparation of the medicine was tigress's milk which should be somehow procured to make the medicine effective. This became the opportunity for Manikantha to fulfil His mission of killing the demoness, Mahishi. So, He agreed to bring the tigress's milk and went into the forest. In a pitched battle He killed Mahishi and thereafter returned riding on a tiger along with an army of tigresses. The king was overjoyed and the queen became stunned. They realised that Manikantha was an avatara of God Himself. They prayed for mercy and forgiveness. Manikantha embraced the king and, as the purpose of His avatara was over, asked the king for permission to leave. The king requested the Lord to make His abode in his kingdom. Thereupon He agreed that a temple be constructed at the spot where His arrow fell. The arrow fell on the Sabarimala and thus this temple was built. The pilgrimage to this temple involves severe austerities. The temple is open only during certain periods of the year, i.e. Makara Sankaranti (mid-January), Panguni Uthiram (March-April), Vishu (April),

Pratishtha Day (May-June), Onam Festival (Aug-September), and Mandala Puja (mid-November/December). Witnessing the strange Flash of Light (Makara Jyoti) during the Sankaranti is the most important for which lakhs of pilgrims assemble here.

346. KAVIYUR

85 Km from Chalakayam via Tiruvalla.

MAHADEVA TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mahadeva and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. There is also a cave temple here which is said to have been built by Pancha Pandavas.

347. ALLEPPEY

55 Km from Kaviyur via Tiruvalla and Changanacheri.

MULLAKKAL BHAGAVATI TEMPLE

The Goddess dwelling in this temple is known as Mullakkal Bhagavati. The sanctum is without any roof and the deity is exposed to sun and rain. The legend says that a brahmin devotee of the Devi came here at dusk, the time for evening puja. He went to the nearby tank for bath keeping the idol of the Devi under a jasmine(Mullakkal) plant. When he returned, he found that the idol had rooted to the ground. The brahmin understood the divine manifestation and built this temple.

348. KOTTAYAM

48 Km from Alleppey. There are two important temples here.

1. TIRUNAKKARA MAHADEVA TEMPLE

This temple is situated in the heart of the town. The Lord adorning this temple is known asTirunakkara Mahadeva

and the Goddess, Parvati. The legend about the origin of this temple states that the Raja of Tekkumkoor was very pious and an ardent devotee of Siva. Every month he used to visit the Vadakkunathar temple at Trichur. When he became old and infirm, he could not undertake the visit to Trichur. So, he prayed to the Lord. The Lord appeared in his dream and consoled him that he need not visit Trichur any more. The Lord also told him that He would appear in the Tirunakkara Hill. One day while the farmers were hoeing the ground on the slopes of Nakkara hill, they found a beautiful Sivalinga with a bull in front of it and a plant in the rear. The king was overjoyed and built this temple.

2. KUMARANALLUR DEVI TEMPLE

This temple is situated about 4 Km from Tirunakkara Mahadeva temple. The Goddess is known as Kumaranallur Devi. The legend behind this temple is that one day while the priest was removing the garland of Madurai Meenakshi, the nose-ring was found missing. The King was enraged and ordered to behead the priest if he could not retrieve the nose-ring in a day. Fearing death, the priest fled. As he was fleeing, a light was flashed by the Goddess in his path showing him the way till he reached this place. After reaching here, the Devi intruded into this temple which was originally built for Lord Subramanya by king Cheraman Perumal.

349. ETTUMANUR

11 Km from Kottayam.

ETTUMANURAPPAN TEMPLE

This temple is one of the richest temples of Kerala. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ettumanurappan and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is believed that the Lord here is in Aghora roopa. Hence He instills fear and discipline in His devotees. The Lingamurti in this temple is said to be

one of the three lingas given to Asura Khara by Lord Siva which he carried in his left hand. There is a big lamp which the devotees have to worship first. It is said that this lamp was installed in 1545 A.D. and its wicks have been burning ever since. The paddy filled inside the Rishabha Vahana of this temple is believed to have medicinal effects. It is believed that victims of witchcraft and mental diseases get complete relief by worshipping the Lord here. The darshan of the 7.$^{1}/_{2}$" golden elephant is considered to be very auspicious.

350. KADUTHURUTI

12 Km from Ettumanur on way to Vaikom.

KADUTHURUTIAPPAN TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kaduthurutiappan and the Goddess, Parvati. The Lingamurti in this temple is said to be one of the three Lingas given to Asura Khara by Lord Siva which he carried in his mouth.

351. VAIKOM

13 Km from Kaduthuruti. There are two important temples.

1. VAIKKATHAPPAN TEMPLE

This is one of the most popular temples in Kerala. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Vaikkathappan and the Goddess, Parvati. The Lord assumes three forms in a day. In the morning, He is Dakshinamurti, at noon, Kirata (hunter) and in the evening He is in the form of Satchidananda with His consort Parvati. The Lingamurti is huge in size and is one of the three Lingas given to Asura Khara by Lord Siva. The legend is that Khara propitiated Lord Nataraja at Chidambaram. Moved by his devotion, the Lord granted him several boons and also gave three Siva Lingas. Khara took hold of two lingas, one in each hand, and the third

in his mouth.On the way, he was overcome by the weight of the Lingas. He set the Linga in his right hand at this place and the left hand Linga at Ettumanur and the third one at Kaduthuruti, midway between the two places. After a while, he tried to lift the Lingas but they had already rooted to the ground. Sage Vyaghrapada appeared on the scene. Khara entrusted the Lingas to the care of the Sage. It is therefore, the tradition that one should worship all the three Lingas on the same day.

2. SUBRAMANYA SWAMY TEMPLE (UDAYANAPURAM)

This temple is situated about 2 Km from Vaikkathappan temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Subramanya Swamy. There is an interesting legend about the inter-change of the deities here and at Kumaranallur. This temple was actually intended for the Goddess and the temple at Kumaranallur for Subramanya Swamy. But as the Goddess is said to have intruded into the temple at Kumaranallur, Lord Subramanya took abode here.

352. CHOTTANIKARA

28 Km from Vaikom via Tirupunithura.

BHAGAVATI TEMPLE

This is a very important temple. The famous deity adorning this temple is known as Chottanikara Bhagavati Amman. The Goddess, also known as Rajarajeswari, is said to be self-born. The deity is worshipped in three different forms: as Saraswati in the morning, as Bhadrakali at noon and as Durga in the evening. The Goddess, Bhagavati, is wearing malas of both saligram and rudraksha and hence this temple is visited by both Saivites and Vaishnavites. People who are suffering by haunt of any evil spirits or from any mental disorder, come here and stay till cured. There is also a sannidhi for Sastha.

353. ERNAKULAM.

18 Km from Chottanikara.

ERNAKULATHAPPAN TEMPLE

The presiding deity of this temple is known as Ernakulathappan and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The story behind is that a boy by name Devala, who was a disciple of a rishi, while collecting material for rituals, came across a serpent and out of fear, killed it. Enraged, the Rishi cursed the boy. The boy's face turned into a serpent's hood and came to be known as Nagarshi. He prayed to the rishi. The rishi advised him to propitiate Lord Siva with the Panchakshara mantra. Nagarshi set out on a pilgrimage to various places of worship. One day he had a dream that he would come by a Siva Linga and whenever this Linga gets stuck to the ground at that moment he would be redeemed from the curse. Accordingly, he found the Linga and took it with him. When he came to this place, the Linga got stuck to the ground. Realising that the curse had come to an end, he went to the nearby tank to take a bath but disappeared in the water. Thus the tank here came to be known as Rishinagakulam.

354. KALADI.

44 Km from Ernakulam via Alwaye and Angamalai.

ADI SANKARA TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of the River Periyar. This is the birth place of Adi Sankara, the greatest religious reformer. In this temple, apart from the Murti of Adi Sankara, there are also Murtis of Aryamba (Adi Sankara's mother), and Lord Krishna. There is also a sannidhi for Saradamba. Tranquility and peace pervade the whole place making it ideal for meditation.

355. PARUR

33 Km from Kaladi via Angamalai.

PARUR MOOKAMBIKA TEMPLE

This temple is dedicated to Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning. The temple was built by a local ruler. He was a great devotee of Goddess Saraswati and used to visit the Mookambika temple in Karnataka. When he became too old and weak, he could no longer undertake the long journey to Karnataka. He prayed to the Goddess and in his dream She advised him to build a temple here itself. Accordingly, he built this temple. There is also a Swayambhu Linga in this temple.

356. TIRUVANJIKULAM

6 Km from Parur on way to Kodungallur.

ANJAIKALATH APPAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Anjaikalathappar and the Goddess, Umayammai. It is said that Parashurama worshipped the Lord here. This is the only Siva Kshetra in Kerala visited by Sundaramurti Nayanar. It is said that Sundaramurti and Cheraman Nayanar attained moksha and went to Kailas from this place on an elephant and a horse respectively sent for them by the Lord. The tirth is known as Alaivai Tirtham.

357. KODUNGALLUR

2 Km from Tiruvanjikulam.

KODUNGALLUR BHAGAVATI TEMPLE

This is one of the ancient and important temples. It is built in a very simple and old style. The presiding deity is known as Bhagavati (Kali). The majestic image is six feet high with eight arms carrying various weapons. The sannidhi is facing north. There is also a Siva shrine facing east. Puja

and naivedayam are first offered to Lord Siva and then to the Goddess. According to the legend, Daruka, a demon, worshipped Brahma for power to fight the Devas. Brahma appeared before him and assured him that he would not be killed by any one except by a woman. Daruka began to challenge the very gods. Lord Siva came to the rescue and created from His third eye Goddess Kali who killed the demon.

358. TRICHUR

36 Km from Kodungallur. There are two important temples.

1. VADAKKUNATHAR TEMPLE

This temple is big and very famous. It is situated on a hillock called Vrishachala in the centre of the town. The temple has a classic style of architecture and design which is unique in Kerala. A massive stone wall surrounds the temple with lofty gopurams on the four sides. The presiding deity here is known as Vadakkunathar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The Lingamurti is a mound of ghee ten feet around the core linga, which is believed to be a thousand years old. Traditionally, the abhishekam to the Lord is done with cow's ghee. Because of the constant abhishekam, the ghee seems to have crystallised into a mound unspoilt with age and unmelting despite several lamps burning in the sanctum. The legend is that Parashurama prayed to the Lord that He manifest Himself here and thereafter Parashurama saw an image of Lord Vishnu. (This image is now being worshipped here as Sri Rama.) He was not satisfied and continued his prayers. A small Sivalinga appeared. Parashurama was surprised and again went into meditation. An image of Sankaranarayana emerged now between the two deities, the combined form of Siva and Vishnu. Now Parashurama realised that Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu are the

same. Hence all the three images are said to have been installed by Parashurama. The annual Pooram festival, which is celebrated just in front of this temple by the neighbouring temples, is the most famous of Kerala festivals. A large number of beautifully decorated elephants participate in this festival. It is said that Adi Sankara's parents worshipped the Lord here for 41 days and Adi Sankara was born to them. Adi Sankara also is said to have shed his mortal body here after his earthly mission was over. The presence of the Sankha and Chakra in the precincts of the temple signifies the association of Adi Sankara. There is a beautiful Nandi installed at the entrance to the temple.

2. BHAGAVATI TEMPLE

This temple is situated in front of the Vadakkunathar temple. The Goddess adorning this temple is known as Bhagavati and considered very important.

359. GURUVAYUR

31 Km from Trichur.

MAMMIYUR MAHADEVA TEMPLE

This temple is situated about 2 Km from the famous Guruvayurappan temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mammiyurappan and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. There is also a sannidhi for Guruvayurappan. It is believed that the original pratishtha of Guruvayurappan by Deva Guru and Vayu was done here.

360. COIMBATORE

144 Km from Guruvayur. There are two important temples.

1. DANDAYUDHAPANISWAMY TEMPLE (MARUTHA MALAI)

This temple is situated on a hillock, about 12 Km from Coimbatore. The presiding deity of this temple, Lord Muruga,

is known as Dandayudhapani Swamy. The Lord here is very famous for fulfilling the desires of His devotees.

2. PATEESWARAR TEMPLE (PERUR)

This temple is situated about 9 Km from Coimbatore. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Pateeswarar and the Devi, Panchanayaki. It is said that Brahma and Vishnu worshipped the Lord here. There is also a Kanaka Sabha for Lord Nataraja. Hence the place is also known as Melai Chidambaram. The dance performed by the Lord here is known as Oordhva Tandavam.

361. AVANASHI.

41 Km from Coimbatore.

AVINASIAPPAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Avinasiappar and the Goddess, Perumkarunainayaki. It is said that Devi Sakti and Brahma worshipped the Lord here. The Nandi in this temple is very big. There is a lake where Sundaramurti performed a miracle of saving a brahmin boy from a crocodile's mouth. On the bank of the lake is a temple for Sundaramurti Nayanar.

362. TIRUMURUGANPOONDI

5 Km from Avanashi on way to Tiruppur.

MURUGAVUDAYAR TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Murugavudayar and the Devi, Avudainayaki. The sannidhi of Nataraja is also important here. It is said that Muruga worshipped the Lord here. The tirth is known as Muruga Tirtham. It is also said that presents given to Sundarar were snatched away by bandits and restored to him by the Lord. Near this temple is another Siva temple with a separate sannidhi for Ketu.

363. CHAMARAJANAGAR

133 Km from Tirumuruganpoondi via Avanashi, Annur and Satyamangalam.

CHAMARAJESWARAR TEMPLE

The temple is big and famous. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Chamarajeswarar and the Devi, Parvati.

364. T. NARASIPUR

35 Km from Chamarajanagar.

AGASTYESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is situated at the Sangam of the Rivers Cauvery and Kapila. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Agastyeswarar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that Sage Agastya worshipped the Lord here. Sri Rama, while returning from Lanka, is also said to have worshipped the Lord here.

365. TALAKAD

14 Km from T. Narasipur.

VAIDYESWARA TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Vaidyeswara and the Goddess, Manonmani. According to the legend, an elephant daily used to spurt water and also offer lotuses at the tree here as a token of worship to the Lord. Intrigued by this sight, Tala and Kada, two hunters, struck at the tree with an axe to find out what might lie below. They saw blood gushing out of a Linga. A heavenly voice bade them to dress the wound with the juice of the tree's leaves. They did so and the blood ceased to flow. As the Lord treated His wound Himself, He is known as Vaidyeswara. There are four other Lingas known as Arkeswara, Pataleswara,

Saikateswara and Mallikarjuna. These five Lingas represent Lord Siva's five faces.

366. NANJANGUD

43 Km from Talakad **Via** T. Narasipur.

NANJUNDESWARAR TEMPLE

This temple is built in Dravidian style. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Nanjundeswarar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. In the southern side of the temple, there are idols of 63 nayanars and, on the northern side, 25 incarnations of Lord Siva. The Lord here is very famous for healing of incurable diseases. It is said that the royal elephant of Tippu Sultan lost its eyes. The elephant was sent to this temple for performance of seva. After 48 days of continuous seva, the elephant regained its eye-sight. Tippu Sultan, therefore, called the Lord as 'Hakim Nanjunda'. Parashurama did penance here and got relieved of his 'Matruhatya Dosha'. There is a separate temple on the bank of the River Kapila dedicated to Parashurama which is also worth seeing.

367. MYSORE

23 Km from Nanjangud.

CHAMUNDESWARI TEMPLE

This temple is situated at the top of the Chamundi Hill. There is a fine road for going to the top of the hill. The Goddess adorning this temple is known as Chamundeswari. She is seen here with her eight arms holding various weapons in the act of killing Mahishasura. Mahishasura did a severe penance for propitiating Lord Siva and obtained a boon of not to be killed by any one except by a woman. He started harassing the Devas and the Devas prayed to the Goddess for relief. In a battle that ensued, the Goddess killed

Mahishasura and thus She also came to be known as 'Mahishasura Mardini'. There is a gigantic statue of Mahishasura in the vicinity of the temple. Closeby, there is also a temple for Lord Siva known as Mahabaleswara It is believed that this Linga was installed and worshipped by Markandeya. On the way up the hill, there is a huge Nandi. Nearly 16 feet high, the sitting bull is a monolithic stone adorned with bells and jewels carved in it.

368. SUBRAMANYA

212 Km from Mysore via Hunsur, Mediken and Sulya. There are two temples.

1. SUBRAMANYA TEMFLE

This is one of the ancient and famous temples of Lord Subramanya in Karnataka. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Subramanya. It is said that Vasuki, the serpent king, did a penance here. The Lord appeared and gave him darshan. Vasuki also prayed to the Lord to stay along with him permanently at this place. From that time, it is believed that the Lord made His spiritual presence in this shrine along with His consort, Devasena (Deivayanai) and Vasuki. A Garuda pillar with bronze lamps is situated between the sanctum and the mandap. This pillar sanctified with Mantras is erected in order to shield the people from the flames of poison emanating from the breath of Vasuki residing inside. Pradakshina is to be done including this pillar.

2. ADI SUBRAMANYA TEMPLE

This temple is situated very near to Subramanya Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Adi Subramanya. Puja is performed to a large ant-hill in the sanctum. Various forms of worship and offerings are made here every day.

369. KASARGOD

91 Km from Subramanya.

MALLIKARJUNA TEMPLE

This is a big and ancient temple. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Mallikarjuna and the Goddess, Devi Parvati.

370. MADHUR

6 Km from Kasargod.

MADANANTHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Madanantheswarar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhu Linga. There is a shrine for Mahaganapati which is very famous. According to Sthalapurana, some sages were performing a Yagna here. But, as they omitted to propitiate Vigneswara before starting the Yagna, there was a very heavy rain. On realising the omission, they painted a figure of Vinayaka on a wall of the temple and worshipped Him. Vigneswara manifested Himself before them and fulfilled their wishes.

371. MANGALORE

55 Km from Madhur via Kasargod.

KADRI MANJUNATHESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Kadri Manjunatheswarar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhu Linga. It is said that Yogi Goraknath worshipped the Lord here. There are nine Kundas in the temple and a dip in these kundas is said to cure skin ailments. About 5 Km from here, there is an ancient temple for Goddess Mangaladevi, which is worth visiting.

372. KATEEL

22 Km from Mangalore.

BHRAMARAMBA TEMPLE

The temple is situated on the bank of the River Nandi. The Devi adorning this temple is known as Bhramaramba. It is said Arunasura got a boon from Brahma that he would not suffer death by any man, woman or any two legged or four legged creature or otherwise by any weapon. He started giving troubles to everyone, including the Devas. On the prayer of the Devas, Adi Sakti took the form of Bhramara (Bee) and, by continuously stinging at him, killed the asura. As desired by the Rishis and the Devas, the Goddess took the soumya roopa and stayed here.

373. DHARMASTHALA

64 Km from Kateel via Moodbidri and Ujire.

MANJUNATHASWAMY TEMPLE

The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Manjunathaswamy and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. It is said that this Lingamurti was brought from Kadri by Annappa Devar. There is also a sannidhi for Annappa Devar. People come here to get their civil disputes settled. The Heggade of Dharmasthala settles such disputes more than any court established for dispensation of civil justice. Free meals are also served throughout the day for those who visit the temple.

374. HALEBID

96 Km from Dharmasthala.

HOYSALESWARA TEMPLE

There are two temples of identical structure joined together, dedicated to Lord Siva known as Hoysaleswara

and Kedareswara. There are also shrines for the Sun and the Moon by the side of the Nandi.

375. SRINGERI

116 Km from Dharmasthala via Chikmagalur and Balehonnur.

SANKARACHARYA MATH

This is situated on the bank of the River Tungabhadra Adi Sankara established here his chief math. It is said that when Adi Sankara saw a cobra spreading its hood over a pregnant frog protecting it from the sun, forgetting their natural enmity, he was induced to select this place as the site for the Math. Adi Sankara also installed an image of Saradamba with Srichakra in front of Her. The famous Vidyasankara temple was built on the site where Vidyatirtha took samadhi. There is a mandapam of twelve pillars representing twelve rasis respectively. They are so arranged that the sun's rays fall on each in the order of the solar months. Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya of Sringeri is staying on the other side of the river in a secluded ashram known as Narasimha Vana. On the hill nearby, there is a Temple for Mallikarjuna. It is said that Sringa Maharishi was born at this place.

376. KIGGA

9 Km from Sringeri.

SRINGESWARA TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Sringeswara. This holy place is associated with Sringa Maharishi who did penance here. He was born to Kasyapa Maharishi. It is said that Kasyapa Maharishi, while bathing in the river, was moved by the sight of the heavenly figure

of Urvasi. A female antelope, who had come to drink water downstream, took the sage's 'virya' along with the water and gave birth to a human child with a horn who later came to be known as Sringa Maharishi. Sringa Maharishi was so blessed that heavy rains followed wherever he went. Tradition says that Sringa Maharishi merged into the Linga here. It is believed that by worshipping the Lord here people do not suffer from drought.

377. UDUPI

89 Km from Sringeri via Agumbe. There are two important temples.

1. CHANDRAMOULISWARA TEMPLE

This temple is situated nearby the famous temple of Lord Krishna. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Chandramouliswara and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. The Linga is black in the morning, blue during the day and white in the night. The Lingamurti is always covered with a Kavacha. It is said that Chandra (Moon) worshipped the Lord here and got relieved of a curse of Dakshaprajapati. According to the tradition, one should visit this temple first and then proceed to the nearby temple of Ananteswara.

2. ANANTESWARA TEMPLE

The Lord adorning this temple is known as Ananteswara. This temple preserves the memory of the puranic episode where Parashurama appeared in the form of Padmanabha.

378. KUMBASI

31 Km from Udupi on way to Coondapur.

MAHAGANAPATI TEMPLE

This temple is situated on a hillock. The presiding deity

is known as Mahaganapati. He is in a standing posture and always covered by a Kavacha. It is said that the Pandavas worshipped the Lord here. Hence He is also known as Pandava Ganapati. There is a tank and in the middle of the tank is a temple dedicated to Sankaranarayana, which is worth seeing.

379. KOLLUR

48 Km from Kumbasi via Coondapur.

MOOKAMBIKA TEMPLE

The temple is situated on the bank of the river Sowparnika. The presiding deity is Devi Mookambika. The divine mother is so called because Her Grace raises even the dull and the dumb to wisdom. The Goddess is sitting in a mystic padmasana posture. This idol was installed by Adi Sankara in the form in which the Devi gave darshan to him. The legend says that Kambha, a demon, had acquired tremendous powers by worshipping Parasakti and began to terrorise the world. Celestial beings came here and worshipped Parasakti to destroy Kambha. The Goddess cursed him to become dumb (muka). But the demon was still destructive. Thereupon the Devi killed him and is said to have merged Herself in the self-created Linga in this temple. This Jyotirlinga is believed to have emerged when Kola Maharishi was doing a penance here. The Lingamurti is divided into two unequal parts by a golden line which can be seen in sunlight deflected from a mirror. The right portion of the separation represents Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara and the larger left part, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati. There is also a sannidhi for Veerabhadra Swamy.

380. GOKARNA

139 Km from Kollur via Bainduru, Honavar and Madangiri.

MAHABALESWARAR TEMPLE

The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Mahabaleswarar and the goddess, Tamra Gouri. The devotees first take bath in the Koti Tirtham and then in the Sea which is considered important before going to the temple. Thereafter they worship Mahaganapati first and then enter the sanctum of Mahabaleswarar. In the sanctum, puja is offered only to the Saligram Peetham and one could perform puja himself with the help of the priest. In the centre of the Peetham which is 3' x 3', there is a small opening and one could feel the Atma Linga by touching the same. The Lingamurti inside is said to be 6' and this could be seen only once in 40 years when Ashtabhandana Mahakumbhabhishekam is held. The Sannidhi is facing west. According to the legend, Ravana did a penance to obtain Atma Linga from Lord Siva. The Lord, pleased with the penance, gave him the Atma Linga on the condition that it should not be placed on the ground. The Devas became envious as they thought Ravana's powers might increase thereby. Hence they approached Mahaganapati for getting back the Linga. Ganapati appeared on the scene as a brahmachari when Ravana was proceeding to perform his evening Anushtana. Ravana requested the brahmachari to keep the Linga in his hands till he came back. The brahmachari agreed on the condition that he would call Ravana by name thrice and if he did not turn up he would place the Linga on the gound. After a little while, He called Ravana by name thrice, in a feeble voice and then left the Linga on the ground. As soon as Ravana came, he saw that the Linga had been kept on the ground. He tried to lift it but could not. Ravana was furious and hit the boy on his head.

Afterwards he came to know that the boy was actually Mahaganapati. He then declared that whoever came to worship Lord Siva in this place should first worship Mahaganapati. There is a Bhadrakali temple nearby, which is also very famous.

381. HAMPI

307 Km from Gokarna via Yellapur, Hubli and Hospet.

VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE

This temple is situated on the bank of the River Tungabhadra. The temple is big and very famous. The eleven-tiered gopuram at the entrance is 165' high. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Virupaksha and the Goddess, Bhuvaneswari. About 1 Km from here there is a big monolithic bull. On the fullmoon of Chaitra a festival is held here and at that time the Lord is taken out in a procession to this place. There are many temples of architectural values surrounding this area. Some of the various places mentioned in the Ramayana are also identified near about Hampi, such as, Kishkinda, Anjani Hill, Pampa Sarovar, Rishyamukha Parvata, Matanga Parvata, Malyavana Parvata, etc.

382. LEPAKSHI

300 Km from Hampi via Bellary, Uravakonda, Anantapur and Penukonda.

VEERABHADRASWAMY TEMPLE

This temple is built on a low rocky hill called Kurmasaila. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Veerabhadraswamy. There are separate sannidhis for Lord

Siva and Vishnu in the same mandapam. To the south of the main shrine there is a Linga under a huge seven headed cobra, a monolithic sculpture, which is worth seeing. Though the temple was set up by Saint Agastya, it was Virupanna, the treasurer of the court of Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar, who gave the temple its present splendour. The entire puranic legends of Lord Siva are translated into stone and paintings on the wall which attract pilgrims, archaeologists and artists equally. In the midst of all this glory, there stands the Kalyanamandapam, as a sad remnant, on account of its being only partly finished. Practically all the work was completed when the king was away and only the Kalyanamandapam was under construction. On his return, the King ,found the treasury empty. It was then ordered that Virupanna be blinded as a punishment for his indiscriminate venture. Virupanna himself carried out the order by dashing his eyes against the wall near the Kalyanamandapam, leaving two dark stains on the wall. Near the temple, there is a colossal Nandi, said to be the biggest one in India.

383. GHATI SUBRAMANYA

66 Km from Lepakshi via Hindupur and Gouribidanur.

GHATI SUBRAMANYA TEMPLE

This is a very ancient temple. The presiding deity is known as Ghati Subramanya. He is here in the form of a seven headed serpent. At the back of the image is Lakshminarasimha Swamy of which the devotees can have a darshan through the mirror placed on the wall behind the image. It is said that this temple was built by the King of Sondur, a devotee of Lord Subramanya, following a dream he saw.

384. NANDI HILLS

30 Km from Ghati Subramanya. There are two important temples.

1. YOGANANDISWARA TEMPLE

The temple is situated at the top of the Nandi Hills. There is a good ghat road to go to the temple. The Lord dwelling in this temple is known as Yoganandiswara and the Goddess, Muktamba. It is said that Nandi did a penance here. Lord Siva gave darshan to him and, this place thereafter came to be known as 'Nandigiri' as ordained by the Lord.

2. BHOGANANDISWARA TEMPLE

This temple is situated down the hill, at Nandi Village, about 16 Km from the Yoganandiswara Temple. The Lord glorifying this temple is known as Bhoganandiswara and the Goddess, Girijamba. There are also sannidhis for Uma-Maheshwara and Arunachaleswara.

385. BANGALORE

60 Km from Nandi Hills.

GANGADHARESWARAR TEMPLE

This is an ancient and big cave temple inside a rock. The Lord adorning this temple is known as Gangadhareswarar and the Goddess, Devi Parvati. This is a Swayambhu Linga. It is said that Rishis Gautama and Bharadwaja worshipped the Lord here. On Makara Sankaranti day, the sun's rays fall on the Lord.

How to Read the Route Maps

1. 55 — Figures indicates distances in Kilometers.

2. (24) — Place where the temple is located, with the serial number followed in the book.

3. Route followed in the book.

   Single line indicates the State highway/other road.

   Double Line indicates National highway.

4. Roads not considered in the Route suggested.

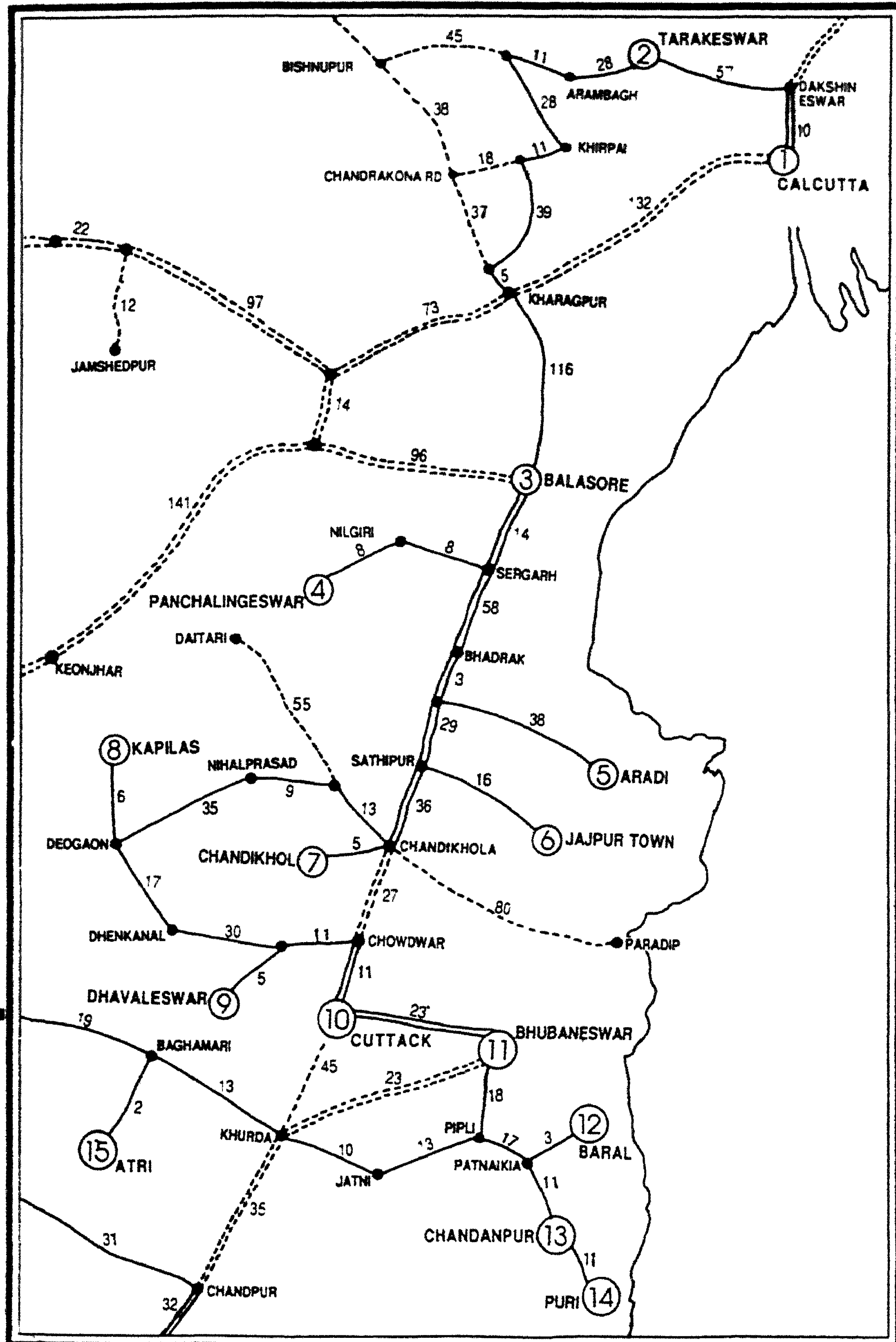
Note: i) Maps are not to scale.

ii) Distances are approximate.

Route Chart 1

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
1.	Calcutta	..	..	..
2.	Tarakeswar	67	Via Dakshineswar.	67
3.	Balasore	238	Via Arambagh and Kharagpur.	305
4.	Panchalingeswar	30	Via Sergarh	335
5.	Aradi	115	Via Sergarh and Bhadrak.	450
6.	Jajpur Town	83	Via Sathipur	533
7.	Chandikhol	57	Via Chandikhola	590
8.	Kapilas	68	Via Nihalprasad and Deogaon.	658
9.	Dhavaleswar	58	Via Deogaon and Dhenkanal on way to Cuttack.	716
10.	Cuttack	27	..	743
11.	Bhubaneswar	23	..	766
12.	Baral	38	Via Pipli and Patnaikia on way to Puri.	804
13.	Chandanpur	14	Via Patnaikia on way to Puri.	818
14.	Puri	11	..	829
15.	Atri	77	Via Pipli, Jatni, Khurda and Baghamari.	906

Route Map 1

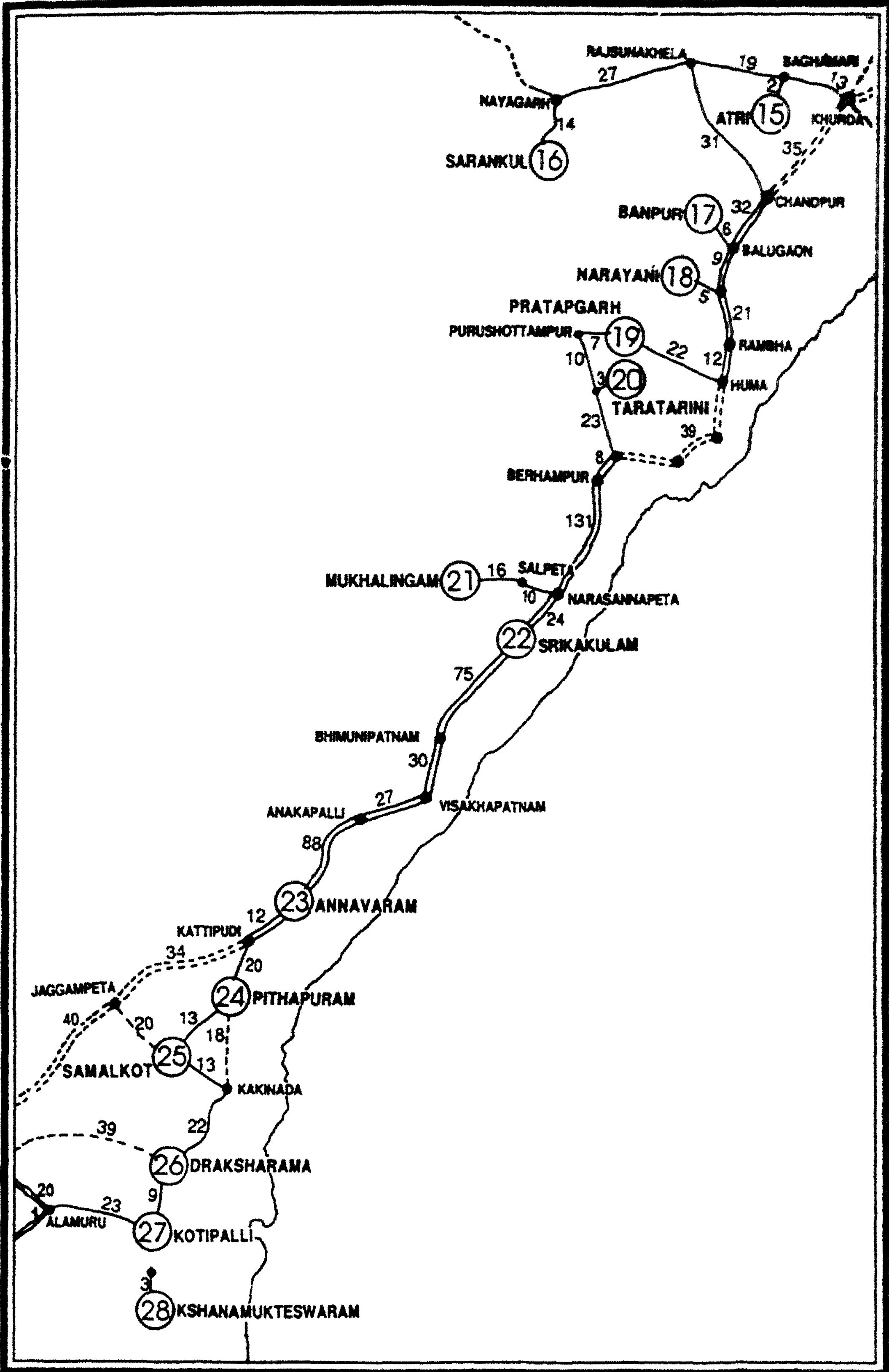


TARAKESWAR
BISHNUPUR
ARAMBAGH
DAKSHIN ESWAR
KHIRPAI
CHANDRAKONA RD
CALCUTTA
JAMSHEDPUR
KHARAGPUR
BALASORE
NILGIRI
SERGARH
PANCHALINGESWAR
DAITARI
BHADRAK
KEONJHAR
KAPILAS
NIHALPRASAD
SATHIPUR
ARADI
DEOGAON
CHANDIKHOL
CHANDIKHOLA
JAJPUR TOWN
DHENKANAL
CHOWDWAR
PARADIP
DHAVALESWAR
CUTTACK
BHUBANESWAR
BAGHAMARI
KHURDA
PIPLI
BARAL
ATRI
JATNI
PATNAIKIA
CHANDANPUR
CHANDPUR
PURI

Route Chart 2

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
16.	Sarankul	62	Via Rajsunakhela and Nayagarh	968
17.	Banpur	110	Via Nayagarh, Rajsunakhela, Chandpur and Balugaon.	1078
18.	Narayani	20	Via Balugaon.	1098
19.	Pratapgarh	60	Via Rambha and Huma on way to Purushottampur.	1158
20.	Taratarini	20	Via Purushottampur.	1178
21.	Mukhalingam	191	Via Berhampur, Narasannapeta and Salpeta.	1369
22.	Srikakulam	50	Via Narasannapeta.	1419
23.	Annavaram	220	Via Visakhapatnam	1639
24.	Pithapuram	32	On way to Kakinada	1671
25.	Samalkot	13	..	1684
26.	Draksharama	35	Via Kakinada	1719
27.	Kotipalli	9	..	1728
28.	Kshana-Mukteswaram	3	After Crossing the River Godavari	1731

Route Map 2

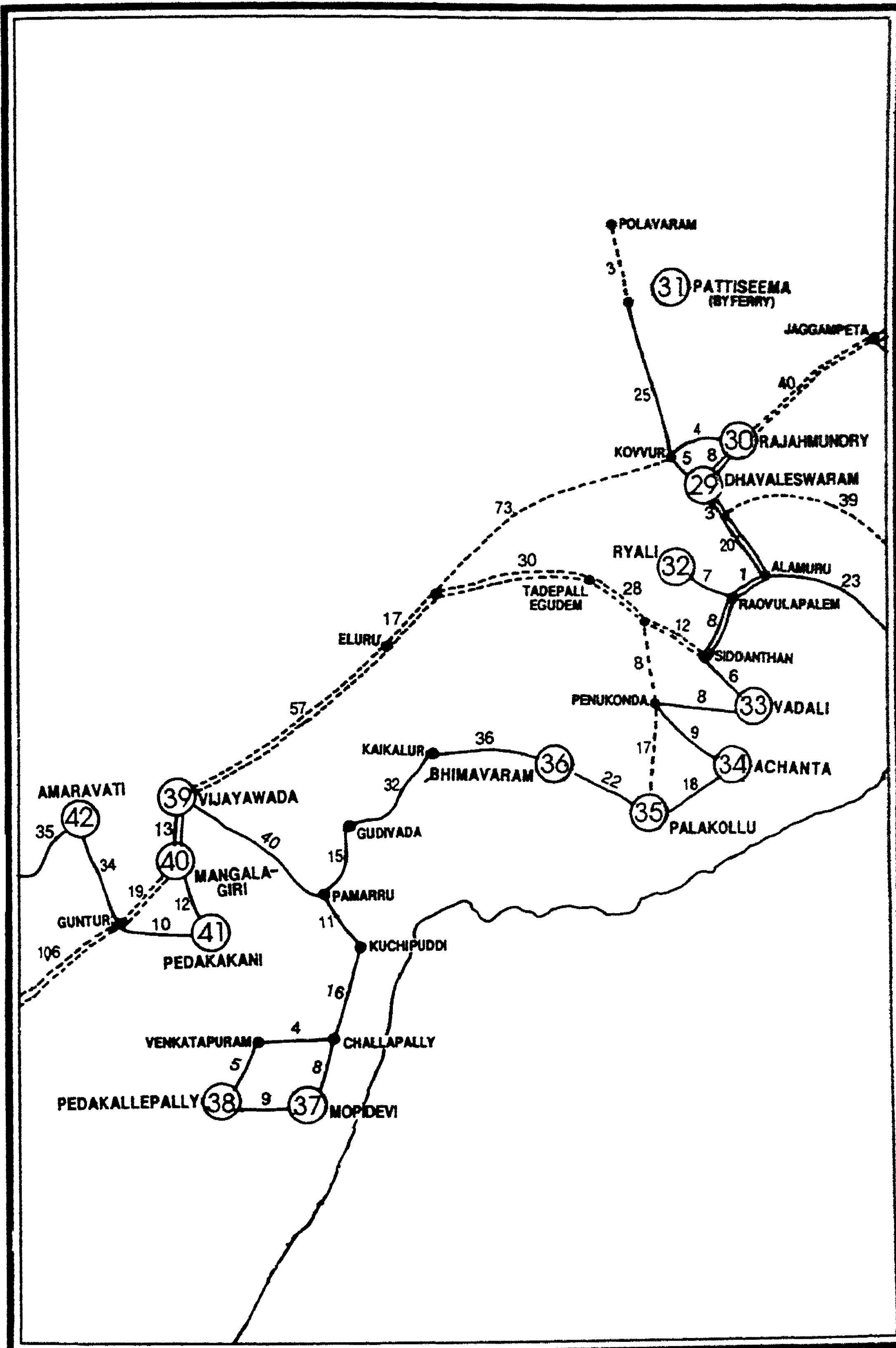


RAJSUNAKHELA
BAGHAMARI
NAYAGARH
ATRI 15
KHURDA
SARANKUL 16
CHANDPUR
BANPUR 17
BALUGAON
NARAYANI 18
PRATAPGARH
PURUSHOTTAMPUR
19
RAMBHA
20
HUMA
TARATARINI
BERHAMPUR
MUKHALINGAM 21
SALPETA
NARASANNAPETA
22 SRIKAKULAM
BHIMUNIPATNAM
ANAKAPALLI
VISAKHAPATNAM
23 ANNAVARAM
KATTIPUDI
JAGGAMPETA
24 PITHAPURAM
SAMALKOT 25
KAKINADA
26 DRAKSHARAMA
ALAMURU
27 KOTIPALLI
28 KSHANAMUKTESWARAM

Route Chart 3

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered* (in Km)
29.	Dhavaleswaram	49	Via Kotipalli and Alamuru on way to Rajahmundry	1780
30.	Rajahmundry	8	..	1788
31.	Pattiseema	29	Via Kovvur towards Polavaram.	1817
32.	Ryali	61	Via Kovvur Dhavaleswaram and Raovulapalem.	1878
33.	Vadali	21	Via Raovulapalem and Siddanthan	1899
34.	Achanta	17	Via Penukonda	1916
35.	Palakollu	18	..	1934
36.	Bhimavaram	22	..	1956
37.	Mopidevi	118	Via Gudivada and Challapally	2074
38.	Pedakallepally	9	..	2083
39.	Vijayawada	76	Via Challapally and Pamarru	2159
40.	Mangalagiri	13	On way to Guntur	2172
41.	Pedakakani	12	..	2184
42.	Amaravati	44	Via Guntur	2228

Route Map 3

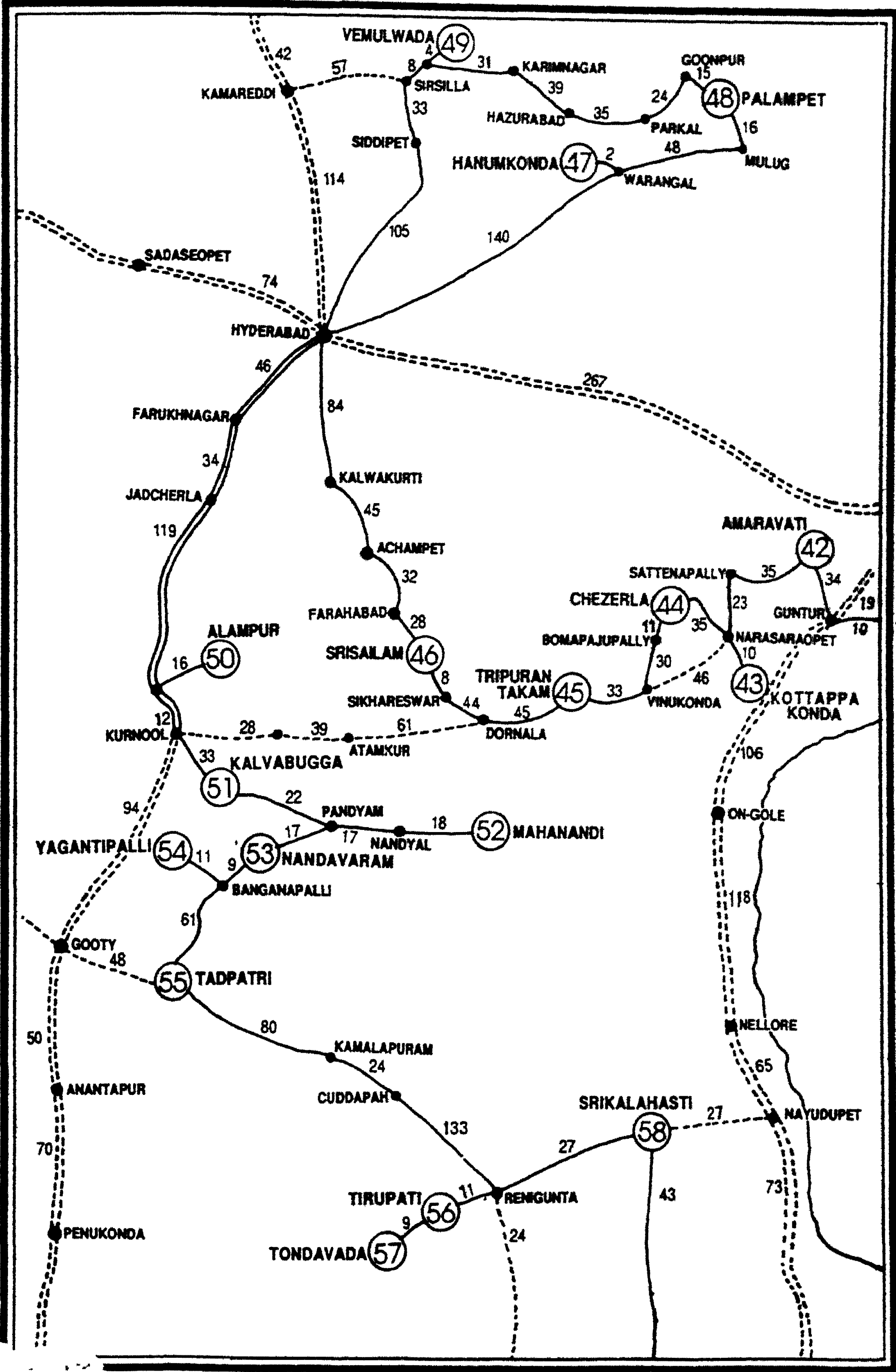


POLAVARAM
31 PATTISEEMA (BY FERRY)
JAGGAMPETA
30 RAJAHMUNDRY
KOVVUR
29 DHAVALESWARAM
RYALI 32
ALAMURU
RAOVULAPALEM
TADEPALLI EGUDEM
ELURU
SIDDANTHAN
PENUKONDA
33 VADALI
KAIKALUR
34 ACHANTA
36 BHIMAVARAM
35 PALAKOLLU
AMARAVATI 42
39 VIJAYAWADA
GUDIVADA
40 MANGALA-GIRI
PAMARRU
GUNTUR
41 PEDAKAKANI
KUCHIPUDDI
VENKATAPURAM
CHALLAPALLY
PEDAKALLEPALLY 38
37 MOPIDEVI

Route Chart 4

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
43.	Kottappa Konda	68	Via Sattenapally and Narasaraopet.	2296
44.	Chezerla	45	Via Narasaraopet.	2341
45.	Tripurantakam	74	Via Vinukonda	2415
46.	Srisailam	97	Via Dornala and Sikhareswar	2512
47.	Hanumkonda	331	Via Hyderabad.	2843
48.	Palampet	66	Via Mulug.	2909
49.	Vemulwada	148	Via Goonpur, Parkal, Hazurabad and Karimnagar	3057
50.	Alampur	365	Via Sirsilla, Siddipet, Hyderabad and Jadcherla.	3422
51.	Kalvabugga	61	Via Kurnool	3483
52.	Mahanandi	57	Via Pandyam and Nandyal	3540
53.	Nandavaram	52	Via Nandyal and Pandyam	3592
54.	Yagantipalli	20	Via Banganapalli.	3612
55.	Tadpatri	72	Via Banganapalli	3684
56.	Tirupati	248	Via Kamalapuram, Cuddapah and Renigunta.	3932
57.	Tondavada	9	...	3941
58.	Srikalahasti	47	Via Tirupati and Renigunta.	3988

Route Map 4

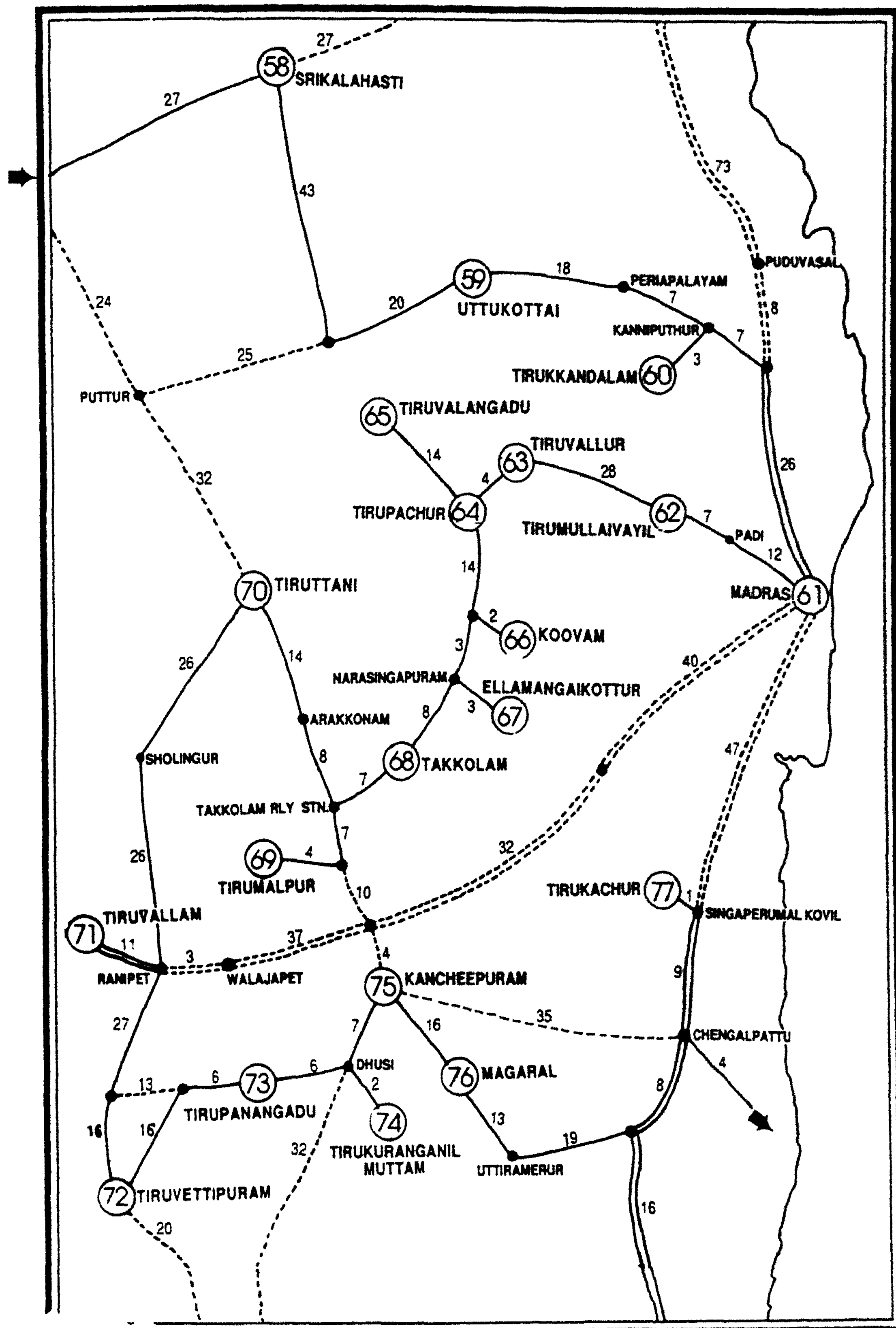


VEMULWADA
49
KAMAREDDI
SIRSILLA
KARIMNAGAR
GOONPUR
48
PALAMPET
HAZURABAD
PARKAL
SIDDIPET
HANUMKONDA
47
WARANGAL
MULUG
SADASEOPET
HYDERABAD
FARUKHNAGAR
KALWAKURTI
JADCHERLA
ACHAMPET
AMARAVATI
42
SATTENAPALLY
CHEZERLA
44
GUNTUR
FARAHABAD
BOMAPAJUPALLY
NARASARAOPET
ALAMPUR
50
SRISAILAM
46
TRIPURAN TAKAM
45
43
KOTTAPPA KONDA
SIKHARESWAR
VINUKONDA
KURNOOL
DORNALA
ATAMKUR
KALVABUGGA
51
PANDYAM
52
MAHANANDI
ON-GOLE
YAGANTIPALLI
54
53
NANDAVARAM
NANDYAL
BANGANAPALLI
GOOTY
55
TADPATRI
NELLORE
KAMALAPURAM
ANANTAPUR
CUDDAPAH
SRIKALAHASTI
58
NAYUDUPET
TIRUPATI
56
RENIGUNTA
PENUKONDA
TONDAVADA
57

Route Chart 5

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
59.	Uttukottai	63	..	4051
60.	Tirukkandalam	28	Via Periapalayam and Kanniputhur.	4079
61.	Madras	36	..	4115
62.	Tirumullaivayil	19	Via Padi	4134
63.	Tiruvallur	28	..	4162
64.	Tirupachur	4	..	4166
65.	Tiruvalangadu	14	..	4180
66.	Koovam	30	Via Tirupachur.	4210
67.	Ellamangaikottur	8	Via Narasingapuram.	4218
68.	Takkolam	11	Via Narasingapuram	4229
69.	Tirumalpur	18	On way to Kancheepuram	4247
70.	Tiruttani	33	Via Arakkonam.	4280
71.	Tiruvallam	63	Via Sholingur and Ranipet	4343
72.	Tiruvettipuram	54	On way to Vandavasi	4397
73.	Tirupanangadu	22	..	4419
74.	Tirukuranganil - Muttam	8	Via Dhusi.	4427
75.	Kancheepuram	9	..	4436
76.	Magaral	16	On way to Uttiramerur.	4452
77.	Tirukachur	50	Via Uttiramerur, Chengalpattu and Singaperumalkovil.	4502

Route Map 5

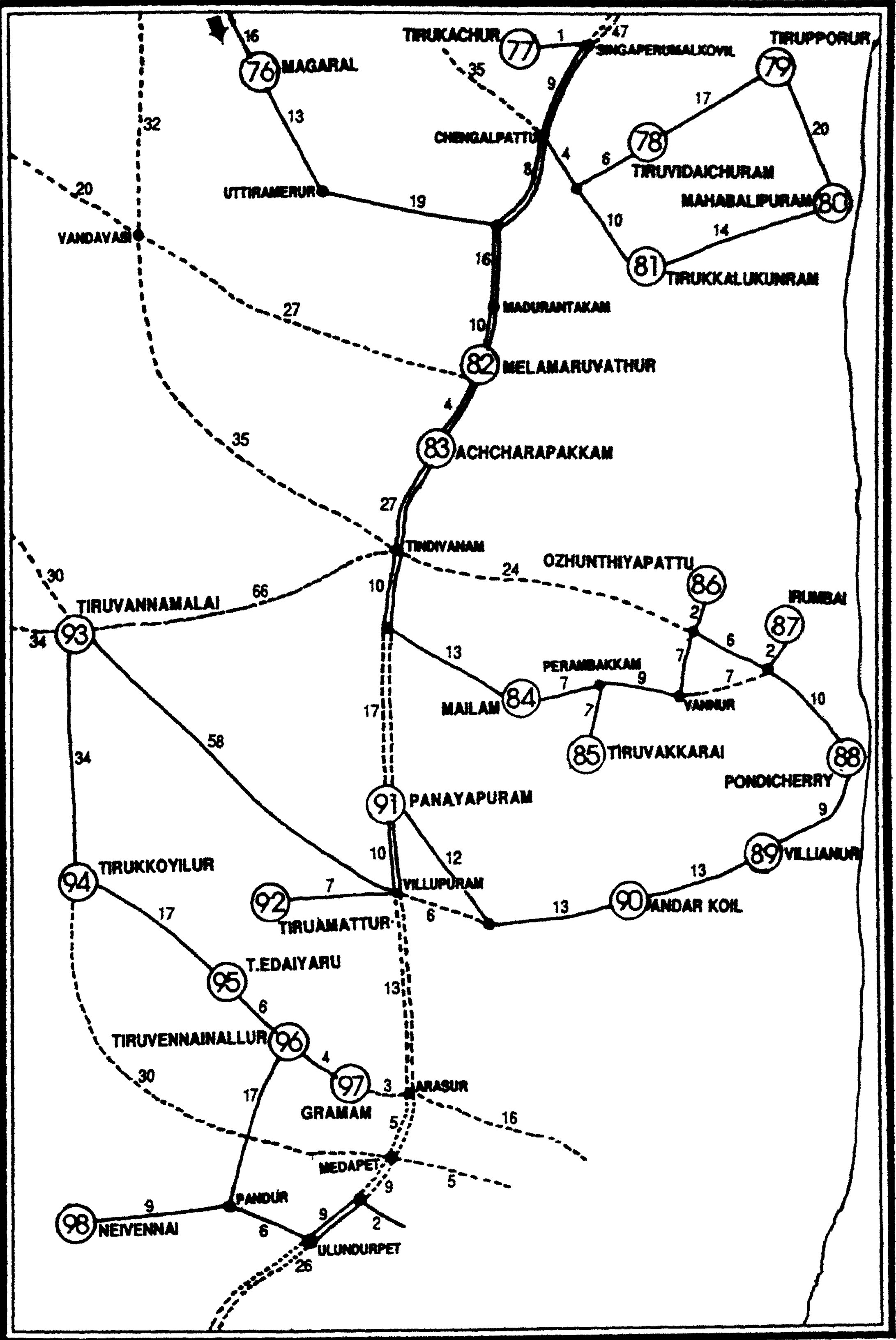


SRIKALAHASTI
UTTUKOTTAI
PERIAPALAYAM
PUDUVASAL
KANNIPUTHUR
TIRUKKANDALAM
PUTTUR
TIRUVALANGADU
TIRUVALLUR
TIRUPACHUR
TIRUMULLAIVAYIL
PADI
MADRAS
TIRUTTANI
KOOVAM
NARASINGAPURAM
ELLAMANGAIKOTTUR
ARAKKONAM
SHOLINGUR
TAKKOLAM
TAKKOLAM RLY STN.
TIRUMALPUR
TIRUKACHUR
SINGAPERUMAL KOVIL
TIRUVALLAM
RANIPET
WALAJAPET
KANCHEEPURAM
CHENGALPATTU
DHUSI
MAGARAL
TIRUPANANGADU
TIRUKURANGANIL MUTTAM
UTTIRAMERUR
TIRUVETTIPURAM

Route Chart 6

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
78.	Tiruvidaichuram	20	Via Chengalpattu on way to Tirupporur.	4522
79.	Tirupporur	17	..	4539
80.	Mahabalipuram	20	..	4559
81.	Tirukkalukunram	14	On way to Chengalpattu	4573
82.	Melamaruvathur	48	Via Chengalpattu and Madurantakam.	4621
83.	Achcharapakkam	4	..	4625
84.	Mailam	50	Via Tindivanam	4675
85.	Tiruvakkarai	14	Via Perambakkam.	4689
86.	Ozhunthiyapattu	25	Via Perambakkam and Vannur.	4714
87.	Irumbai	10	On way to Pondicherry.	4724
88.	Pondicherry	12	..	4736
89.	Villianur	9	On way to Villupuram.	4745
90.	Andar Koil	13	On way to Villupuram.	4758
91.	Panayapuram	25	..	4783
92.	Tiruamattur	17	Via Villupuram.	4800
93.	Tiruvannamalai	65	..	4865
94.	Tirukkoyilur	34	..	4899
95.	T.Edaiyaru	17	On way to Tiruvennainallur.	4916
96.	Tiruvennainallur	6	..	4922
97.	Gramam	4	On way to Arasur	4926.
98.	Neivennai	30	Via Tiruvennainallur and Pandur.	4956

Route Map 6

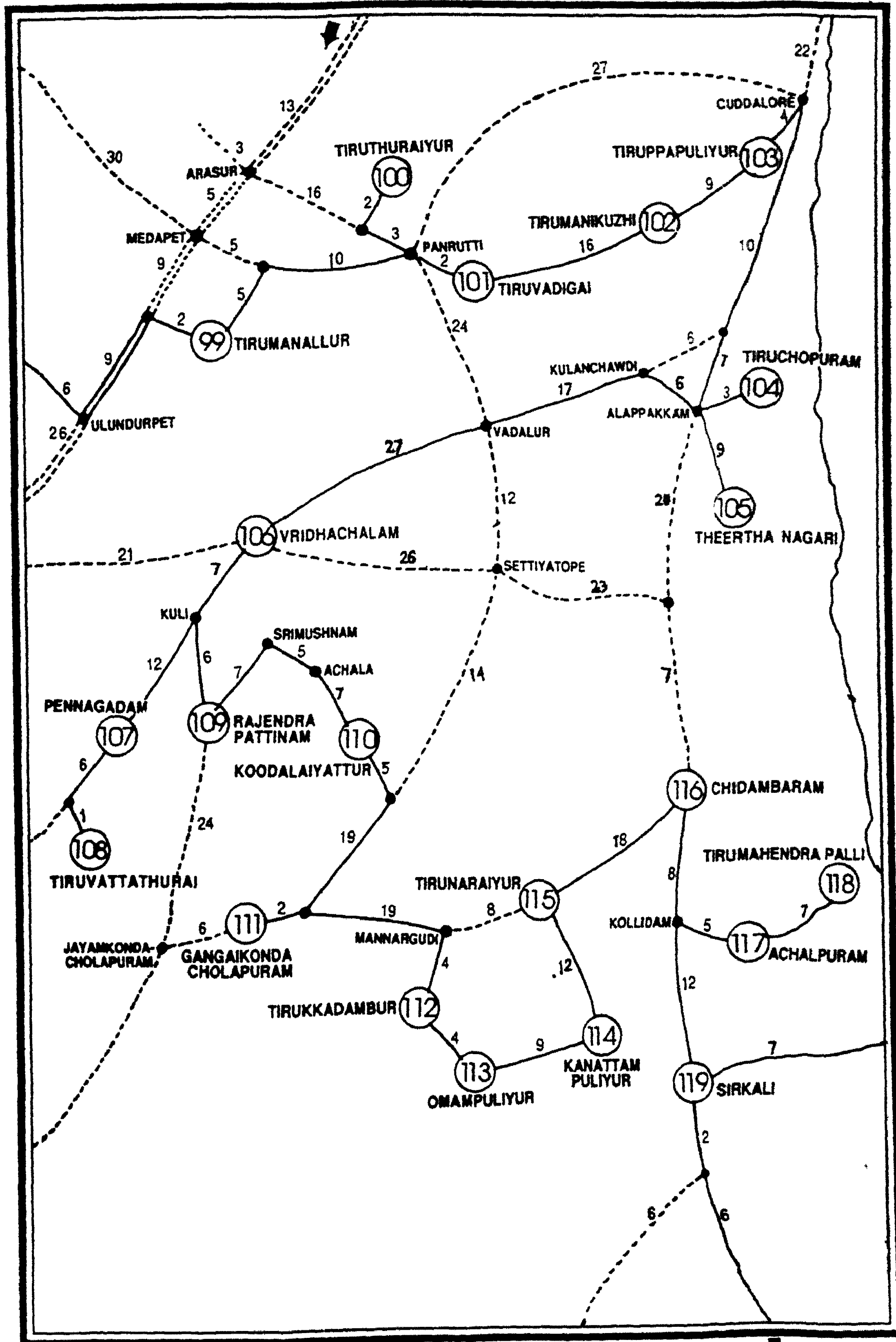


76 MAGARAL
77 TIRUKACHUR
SINGAPERUMALKOVIL
78 TIRUVIDAICHURAM
79 TIRUPPORUR
80 MAHABALIPURAM
81 TIRUKKALUKUNRAM
CHENGALPATTU
UTTIRAMERUR
VANDAVASI
MADURANTAKAM
82 MELAMARUVATHUR
83 ACHCHARAPAKKAM
TINDIVANAM
OZHUNTHIYAPATTU
86
IRUMBAI
87
TIRUVANNAMALAI
93
PERAMBAKKAM
84 MAILAM
VANNUR
85 TIRUVAKKARAI
88 PONDICHERRY
91 PANAYAPURAM
89 VILLIANUR
94 TIRUKKOYILUR
VILLUPURAM
92 TIRUAMATTUR
90 ANDAR KOIL
95 T.EDAIYARU
96 TIRUVENNAINALLUR
97 GRAMAM
ARASUR
MEDAPET
PANDUR
98 NEIVENNAI
ULUNDURPET

Route Chart 7

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
99	Tirumanallur	26	Via Ulundurpet.	4982
100	Tiruthuraiyur	20	Via Panrutti	5002
101	Tiruvadigai	7	On way to Tiruppapuliyur	5009
102	Tirumanikuzhi	16	On way to Tiruppapuliyur	5025
103	Tiruppapuliyur	9	On way to Cuddalore.	5034
104	Tiruchopuram	24	Via Cuddalore and Alappakkam.	5058
105	Theertha Nagari	12	Via Alappakkam.	5070
106	Vridhachalam	59	Via Kulanchawdi	5129
107	Pennagadam	19	..	5148
108	Tiruvattathurai	7	On way to Titagudi	5155
109	Rajendrapattinam	25	Via Pennagadam	5180
110	Koodalaiyattur	19	Via Srimushnam and Achala.	5199
111	Gangaikonda-cholapuram	26	..	5225
112	Tirukkadambur	25	Via Mannargudi towards Omampuliyur.	5250
113	Omampuliyur	4	..	5254
114	Kanattampuliyur	9	..	5263
115	Tirunaraiyur	12	..	5275
116	Chidambaram	18	..	5293
117	Achalpuram	13	Via Kollidam	5306
118	Tirumahendrapalli	7	..	5313
119	Sirkali	24	Via Achalpuram and Kollidam.	5337

Route Map 7

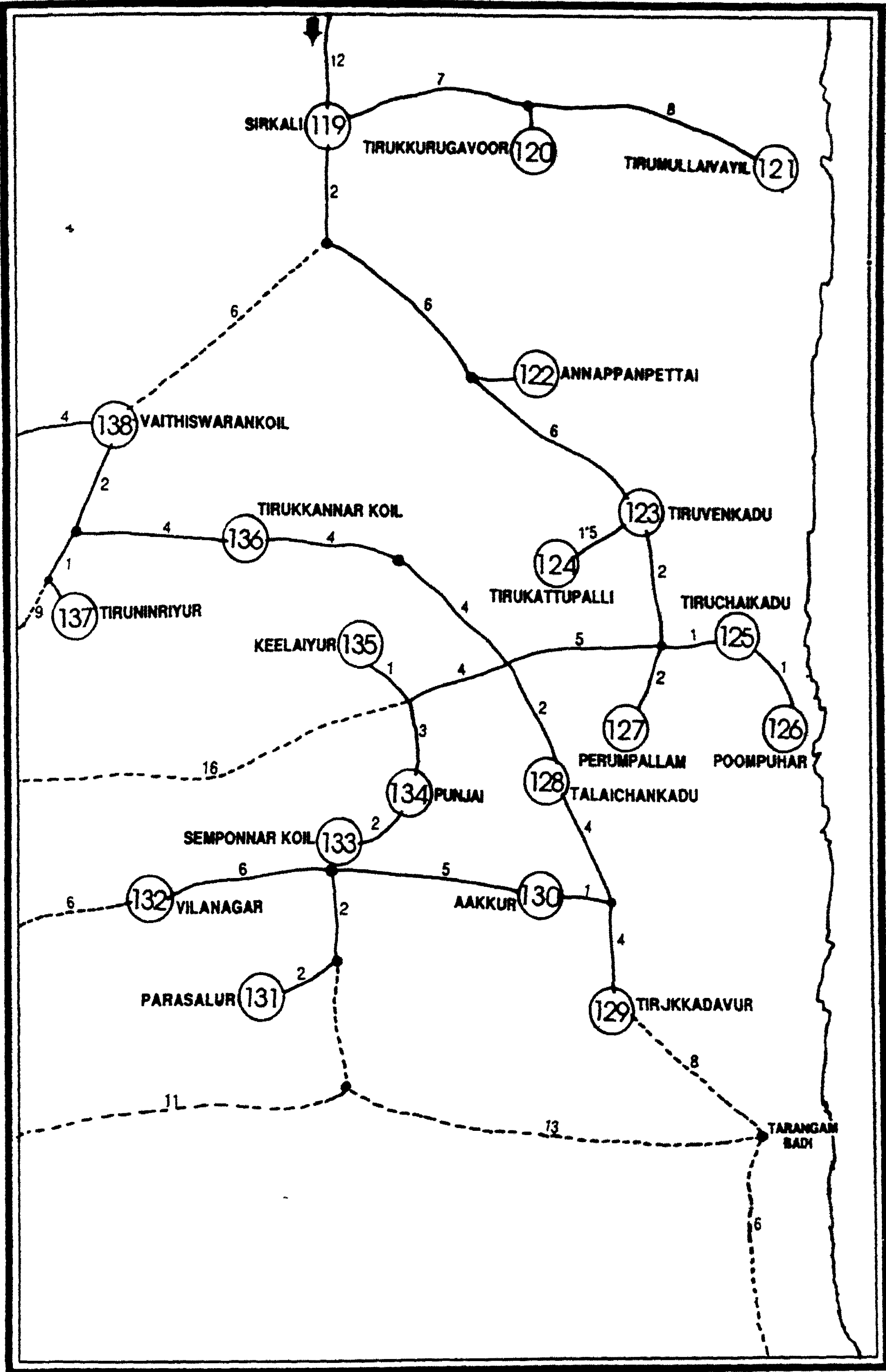


CUDDALORE
TIRUTHURAIYUR
TIRUPPAPULIYUR
ARASUR
TIRUMANIKUZHI
MEDAPET
PANRUTTI
TIRUVADIGAI
TIRUMANALLUR
TIRUCHOPURAM
KULANCHAWDI
ALAPPAKKAM
ULUNDURPET
VADALUR
THEERTHA NAGARI
VRIDHACHALAM
SETTIYATOPE
KULI
SRIMUSHNAM
ACHALA
PENNAGADAM
RAJENDRA PATTINAM
KOODALAIYATTUR
CHIDAMBARAM
TIRUMAHENDRA PALLI
TIRUVATTATHURAI
TIRUNARAIYUR
KOLLIDAM
JAYAMKONDA-CHOLAPURAM
GANGAIKONDA CHOLAPURAM
MANNARGUDI
ACHALPURAM
TIRUKKADAMBUR
KANATTAM PULIYUR
SIRKALI
OMAMPULIYUR

Route Chart 8

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
120	Tirukkurugavoor	7	On way to Tirumullaivayil.	5344
121	Tirumullaivayil	8	..	5352
122	Annappanpettai	23	Via Sirkali towards Tiruvenkadu.	5375
123	Tiruvenkadu	6	..	5381
124	Tirukattupalli	1.5	..	5382
125	Tiruchaikadu	4.5	Via Tiruvenkadu	5387
126	Poompuhar	1	..	5388
127	Perumpallam	4	..	5392
128	Talaichankadu	9	Towards Tarangambadi.	5401
129	Tirukkadavur	8	On way to Tarangambadi	5409
130	Aakkur	5	On way to Semponnarkoil.	5414
131	Parasalur	9	Via Semponnarkoil	5423
132	Vila Nagar	10	Via Semponnarkoil	5433
133	Semponnarkoil	6	..	5439
134	Punjai	2	..	5441
135	Keelaiyur	4	..	5445
136	Tirukkannarkoil	13	..	5458
137	Tiruninriyur	5	..	5463
138	Vaithiswarankoil	3	..	5466

Route Map 8

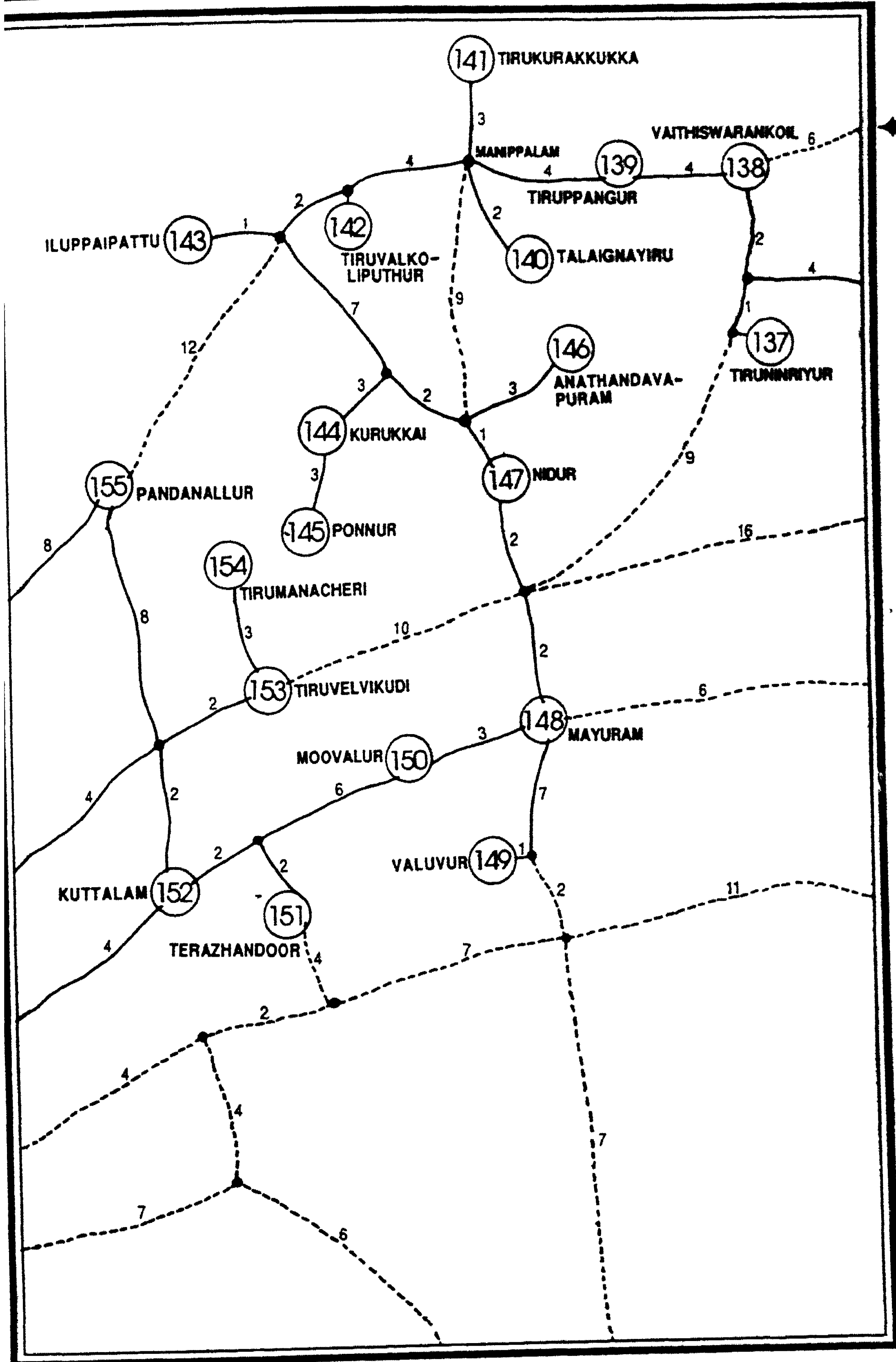


SIRKALI
119
120
TIRUKKURUGAVOOR
121
TIRUMULLAIVAYIL
122
ANNAPPANPETTAI
138
VAITHISWARANKOIL
136
TIRUKKANNAR KOIL
123
TIRUVENKADU
124
TIRUKATTUPALLI
137
TIRUNINRIYUR
125
TIRUCHAIKADU
135
KEELAIYUR
126
POOMPUHAR
127
PERUMPALLAM
128
TALAICHANKADU
134
PUNJAI
133
SEMPONNAR KOIL
132
VILANAGAR
130
AAKKUR
131
PARASALUR
129
TIRJKKADAVUR
TARANGAM BADI

Route Chart 9

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
139	Tiruppangur	4	..	5470
140	Talaignayiru	6	Via Manippalam	5476
141	Tirukurakkukka	5	Via Manippalam	5481
142	Tiruvalkoliputhur	7	Via Manippalam	5488
143	Iluppaipattu	3	..	5491
144	Kurukkai	11	..	5502
145	Ponnur (Tiruanniyur)	3	..	5505
146	Anathandava-puram	11	..	5516
147	Nidur	4	..	5520
148	Mayuram	4	..	5524
149	Valuvur	8	..	5532
150	Moovalur	11	..	5543
151	Terazhandoor	8	..	5551
152	Kuttalam	4	..	5555
153	Tiruvelvikudi	4	..	5559
154	Tirumanacheri	3	..	5562
155	Pandanallur	13	..	5575

Route Map 9

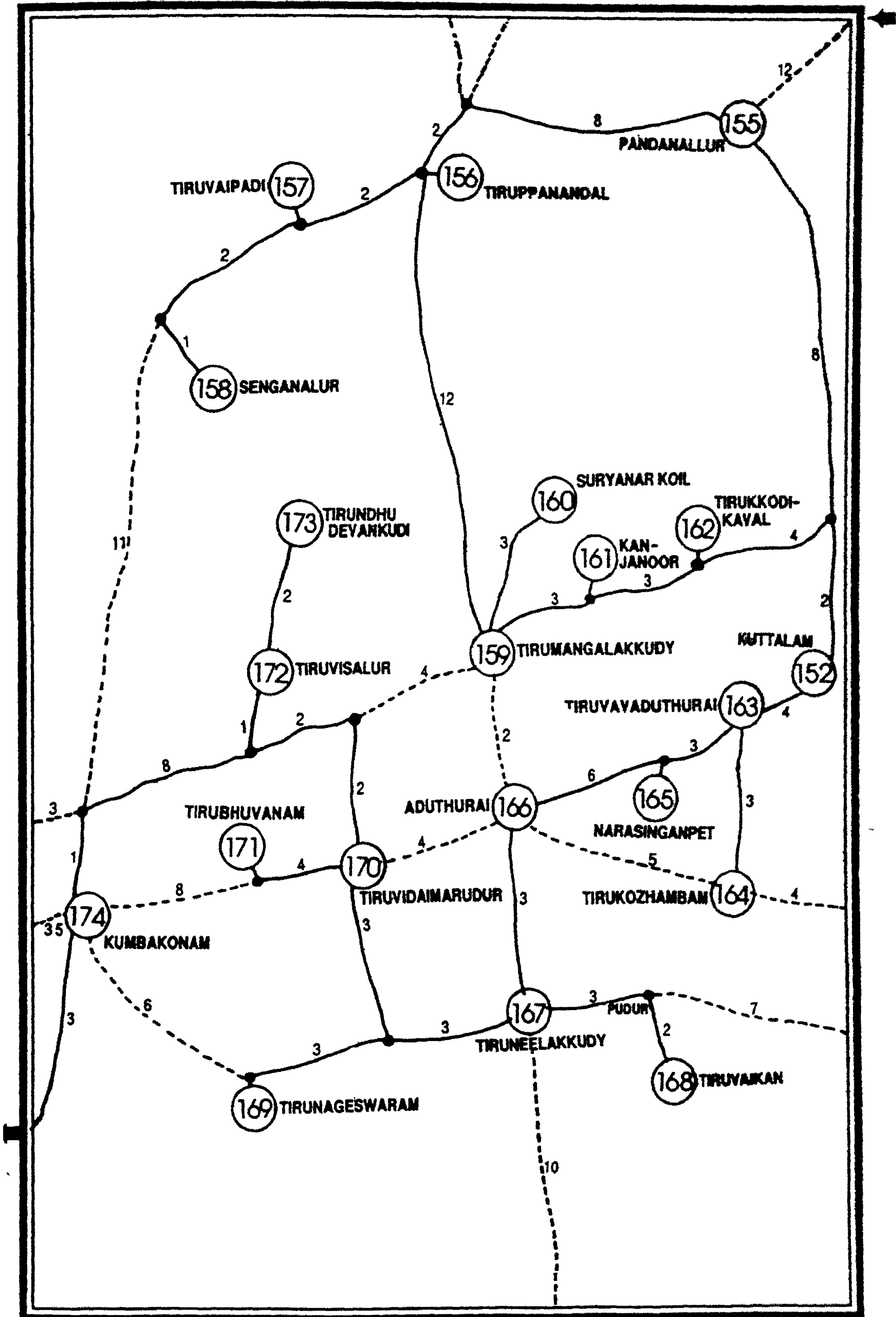


141 TIRUKURAKKUKKA
MANIPPALAM
139
TIRUPPANGUR
VAITHISWARANKOIL
138
142
TIRUVALKO-
LIPUTHUR
ILUPPAIPATTU 143
140 TALAIGNAYIRU
137
TIRUNINRIYUR
146
ANATHANDAVA-
PURAM
144 KURUKKAI
147 NIDUR
155 PANDANALLUR
145 PONNUR
154
TIRUMANACHERI
153 TIRUVELVIKUDI
148
MAYURAM
MOOVALUR 150
VALUVUR 149
KUTTALAM 152
151
TERAZHANDOOR

Route Chart 10

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
156	Tiruppanandal	10	..	5585
157	Tiruvaipadi	2	On way to Kumbakonam	5587
158	Senganalur	3	..	5590
159	Tirumangalakkudy	17	Via Tiruvaipadi.	5607
160	Suryanar Koil	3	..	5610
161	Kanjanoor	6	Via Tirumangalakkudy on way to Tirukkodikaval.	5616
162	Tirukkodikaval	3	On way to Tiruvelvikudy.	5619
163	Tiruvavaduthurai	10	Via Kuttalam on way to Narasinganpet.	5629
164	Tirukozhambam	3	..	5632
165	Narasinganpet	6	Via Tiruvavaduthurai.	5638
166	Aduthurai	6	On way to Kumbakonam	5644
167	Tiruneelakkudy	3	..	5647
168	Tiruvaikan	5	Via Pudur	5652
169	Tirunageswaram	11	Via Tiruneelakkudy.	5663
170	Tiruvidaimarudur	6	..	5669
171	Tirubhuvanam	4	On way to Kumbakonam.	5673
172	Tiruvisalur	9	ViaTiruvidaimarudur.	5682
173	Tirundhudevankudi	2	..	5684
174	Kumbakonam	12	Via Tiruvisalur.	5696

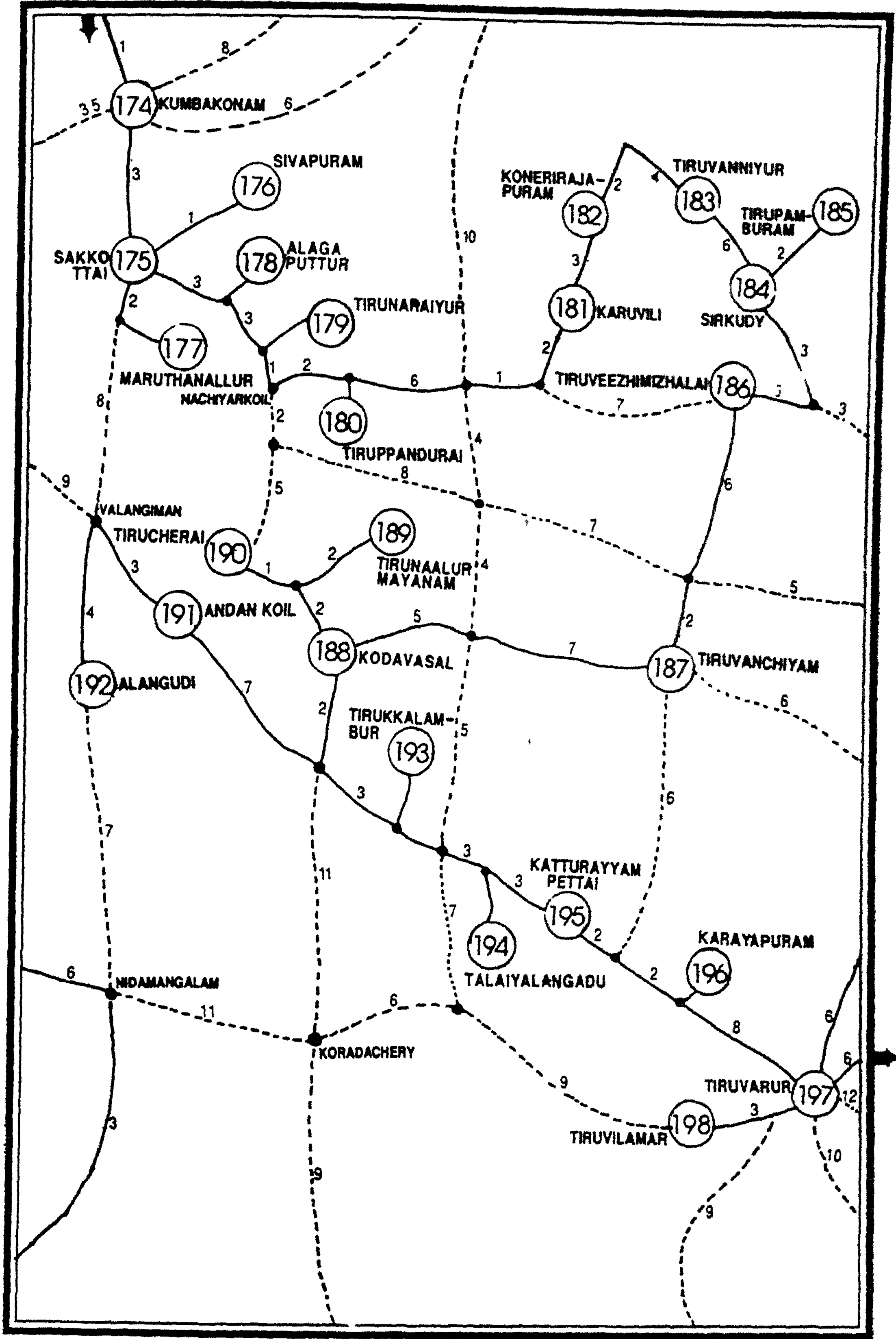
Route Map 10


155 PANDANALLUR
156 TIRUPPANANDAL
TIRUVAIPADI 157
158 SENGANALUR
160 SURYANAR KOIL
161 KAN-JANOOR
162 TIRUKKODI-KAVAL
173 TIRUNDHU DEVANKUDI
172 TIRUVISALUR
159 TIRUMANGALAKKUDY
KUTTALAM 152
TIRUVAVADUTHURAI 163
165 NARASINGANPET
ADUTHURAI 166
TIRUBHUVANAM 171
170 TIRUVIDAIMARUDUR
TIRUKOZHAMBAM 164
174 KUMBAKONAM
167 TIRUNEELAKKUDY
PUDUR
168 TIRUVAIKAN
169 TIRUNAGESWARAM

Route Chart 11

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
175	Sakkottai	3	on way to Nidamangalam.	5699
176	Sivapuram	1		5700
177	Maruthanallur	3	Via Sakkottai.	5703
178	Alagaputtur	5	Via Sakkottai	5708
179	Tirunaraiyur	3	..	5711
180	Tiruppandurai	3	On way to Karuvili.	5714
181	Karuvili	9	..	5723
182	Konerirajapuram	3	..	5726
183	Tiruvanniyur	6	..	5732
184	Sirkudy	6	..	5738
185	Tirupamburam	2	..	5740
186	Tiruveezhimizhalai	8	Via Sirkudy.	5748
187	Tiruvanchiyam	8	..	5756
188	Kodavasal	12	..	5768
189	Tirunaalur Mayanam	4	..	5772
190	Tirucherai	3	..	5775
191	Andan Koil	12	Via Kodavasal.	5787
192	Alangudi	7	Via Valangiman	5794
193	Tirukkalambur	17	Via Valangiman and Andankoil	5811
194	Talaiyalangadu	3	..	5814
195	Kattur Ayyampettai	3	..	5817
196	Karayapuram	4	On way to Tiruvarur.	5821
197	Tiruvarur	8	..	5829
198	Tiruvilamar	3	On way to Nidamangalam	5832

Route Map 11

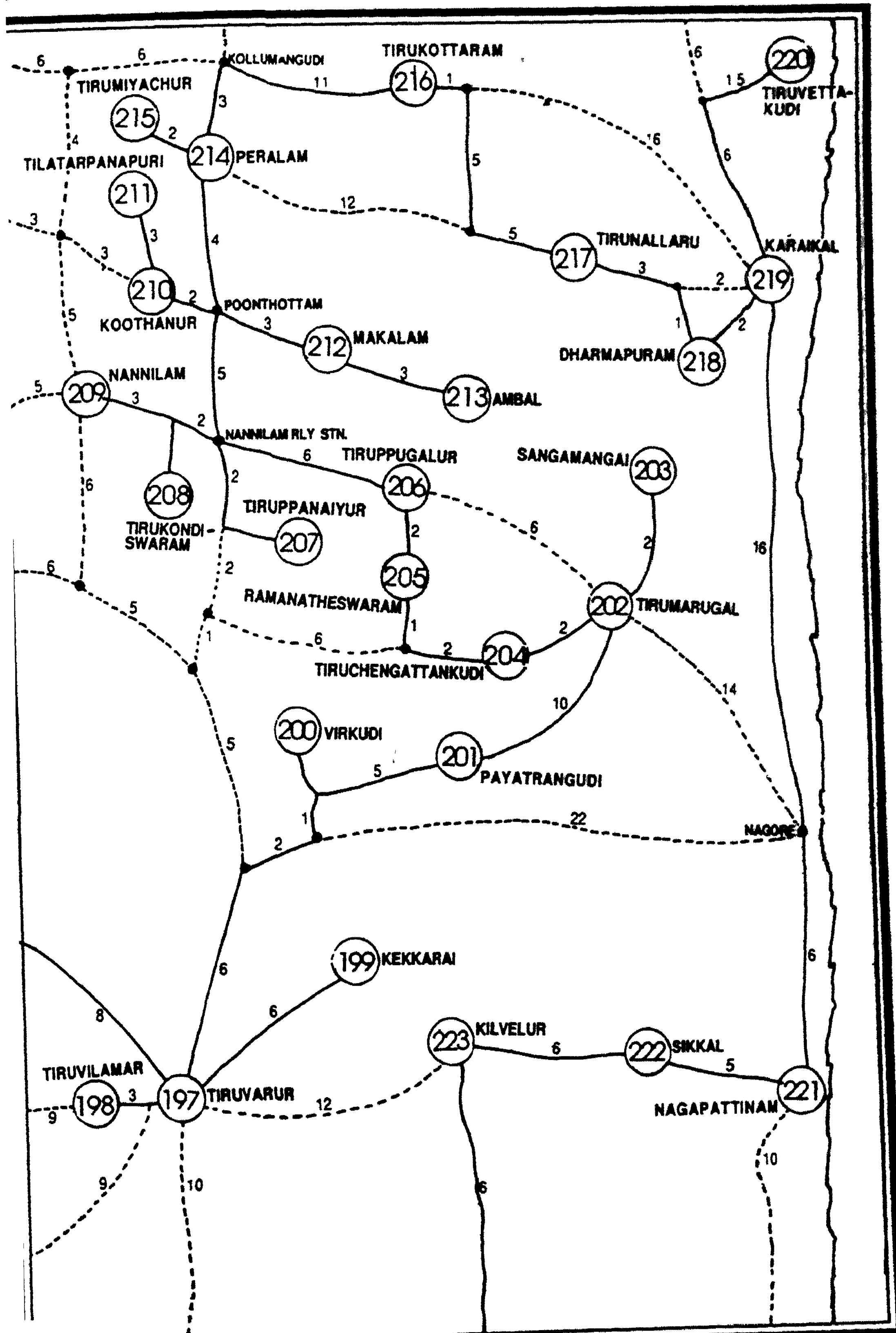


174 KUMBAKONAM
176 SIVAPURAM
175 SAKKOTTAI
178 ALAGAPUTTUR
179 TIRUNARAIYUR
177 MARUTHANALLUR
NACHIYARKOIL
180 TIRUPPANDURAI
182 KONERIRAJAPURAM
183 TIRUVANNIYUR
185 TIRUPAMBURAM
184 SIRKUDY
181 KARUVILI
TIRUVEEZHIMIZHALAI
186
VALANGIMAN
TIRUCHERAI
190
189 TIRUNAALUR MAYANAM
191 ANDAN KOIL
188 KODAVASAL
187 TIRUVANCHIYAM
192 ALANGUDI
TIRUKKALAMBUR
193
KATTURAYYAM PETTAI
195
194 TALAIYALANGADU
KARAYAPURAM
196
NIDAMANGALAM
KORADACHERY
TIRUVARUR
197
198 TIRUVILAMAR

Route Chart 12

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
199	Kekkarai	9	Via Tiruvarur.	5841
200	Virkudi	15	Via Tiruvarur	5856
201	Payatrangudi	5	On way to Tirumarugal.	5861
202	Tirumarugal	10	..	5871
203	Sangamangai	2	..	5873
204	Tiruchengattankudi	4	Via Tirumarugal.	5877
205	Ramanatheswaram	3	..	5880
206	Tiruppugalur	2	..	5882
207	Tiruppanaiyur	8	Via Nannilam Rly. Stn	5890
208	Tirukondiswaram	4	Via Nannilam Rly. Stn	5894
209	Nannilam	3	..	5897
210	Koothanur	12	Via Poonthottam	5909
211	Tilatarpanapuri	3	..	5912
212	Makalam	8	Via Poonthottam	5920
213	Ambal	3	..	5923
214	Peralam	10	Via Poonthottam.	5933
215	Tirumiyachur	2	..	5935
216	Tirukottaram	16	Via Peralam and Kollumangudi.	5951
217	Tirunallaru	11	..	5962
218	Dharmapuram	4	On way to Karaikal.	5966
219	Karaikal	2	..	5968
220	Tiruvettakudi	7.5	On way toTrangambadi	5975
221	Nagapattinam	29.5	Via Karaikal and Nagore	6005
222	Sikkal	5	On way to Tiruvarur.	6010
223	Kilvelur	6	On way to Tiruvarur.	6016

Route Map 12

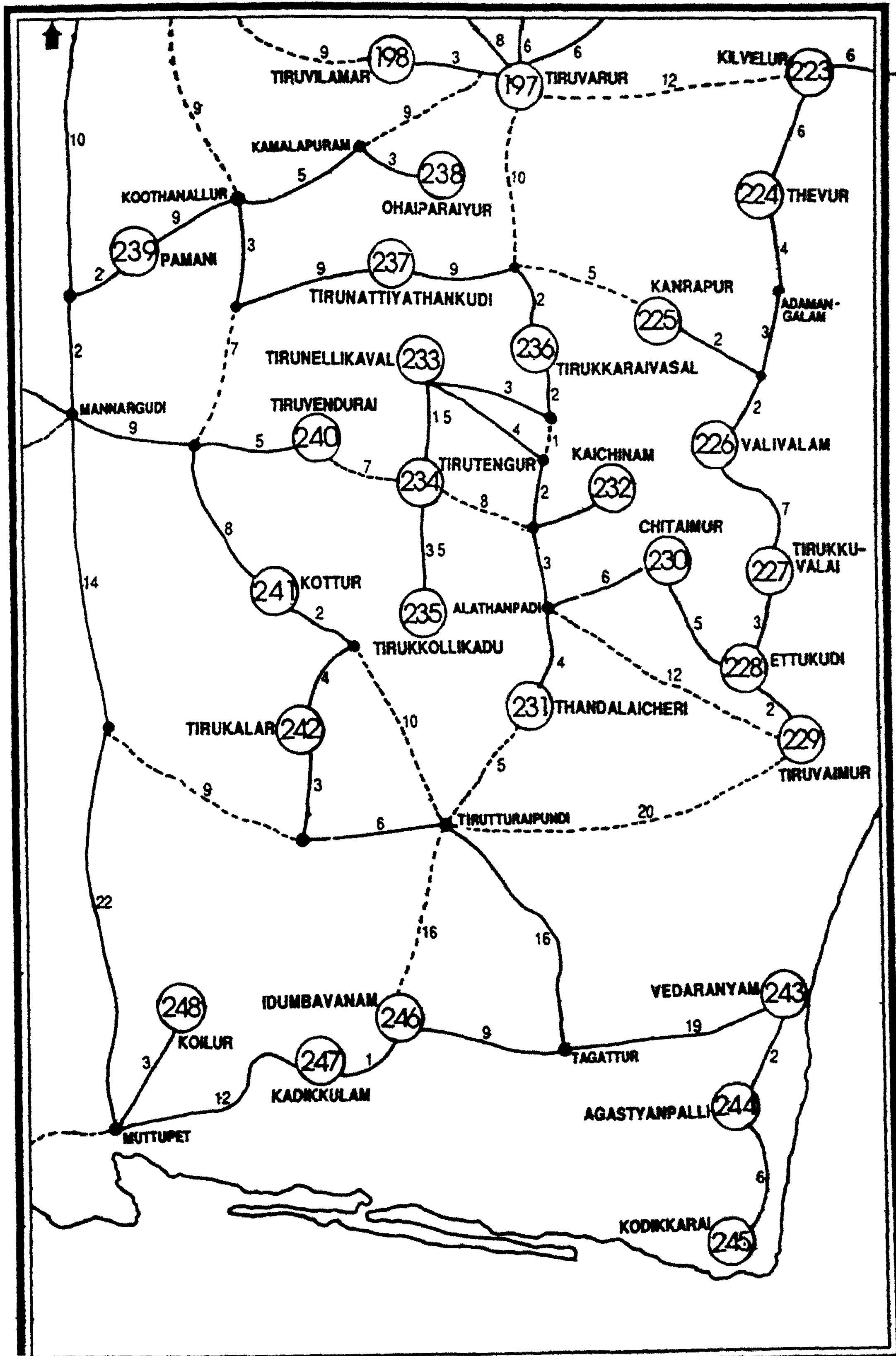


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Route Chart 13

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
224	Thevur	6	..	6022
225	Kanrapur	9	Via Adamangalam.	6031
226	Valivalam	4	..	6035
227	Tirukkuvalai	7	..	6042
228	Ettukudi	3	..	6045
229	Tiruvaimur	2	..	6047
230	Chitaimur	7	Via Ettukudi.	6054
231	Thandalaicheri	10	Via Alathanpadi	6064
232	Kaichinam	7	On way to Tiruvarur.	6071
233	Tirunellikaval	6	..	6077
234	Tirutengur	1.5	..	6078
235	Tirukkollikadu	3.5	..	6082
236	Tirukkaraivasal	10	Via Tirunellikaval	6092
237	Tirunattiyathankudi	11	On way to Koothanallur.	6103
238	Ohaiparaiyur	20	Via Koothanallur and Kamalapuram.	6123
239	Pamani	17	Via Koothanallur	6140
240	Tiruvendurai	18	Via Mannargudi	6158
241	Kottur	13	On way to Tirutturaipundi.	6171
242	Tirukalar	6		6177
243	Vedaranyam	44	Via Tirutturaipundi.	6221
244	Agastyanpalli	2	..	6223
245	Kodikkarai	6	On way to Point Calimere.	6229
246	Idumbavanam	36	Via Vedaranyam	6265
247	Kadikkulam	1	..	6266
248	Koilur	15	Via Muttupet.	6281

Route Map 13

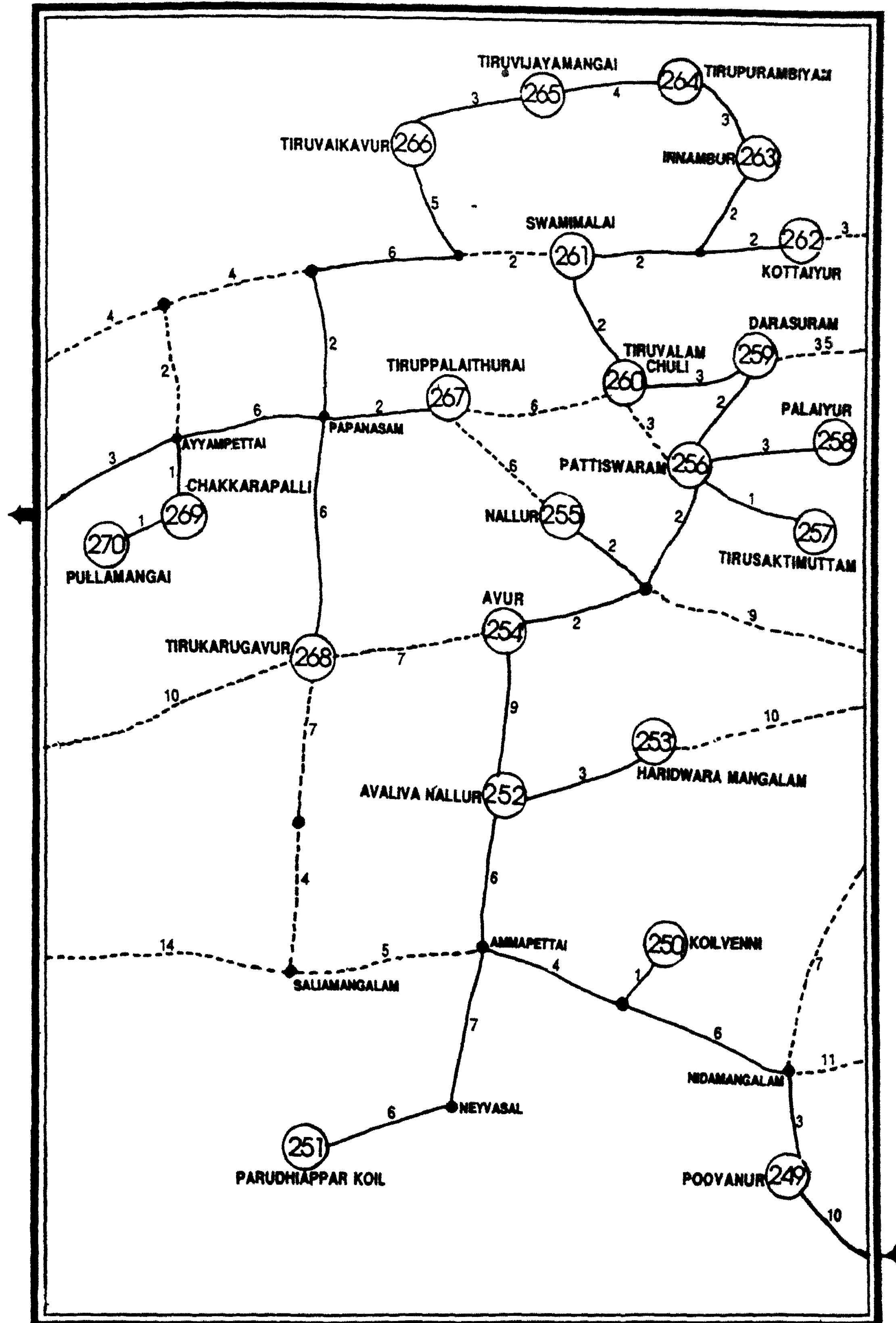


TIRUVILAMAR
198
TIRUVARUR
197
KILVELUR
223
KAMALAPURAM
238
OHAIPARAIYUR
KOOTHANALLUR
224
THEVUR
239
PAMANI
237
TIRUNATTIYATHANKUDI
KANRAPUR
ADAMAN-GALAM
225
236
TIRUKKARAIVASAL
TIRUNELLIKAVAL
233
MANNARGUDI
TIRUVENDURAI
240
KAICHINAM
226
VALIVALAM
TIRUTENGUR
234
232
CHITAIMUR
230
TIRUKKU-VALAI
227
241
KOTTUR
235
ALATHANPADI
TIRUKKOLLIKADU
228
ETTUKUDI
231
THANDALAICHERI
TIRUKALAR
242
229
TIRUVAIMUR
TIRUTTURAIPUNDI
VEDARANYAM
243
IDUMBAVANAM
246
248
KOILUR
247
TAGATTUR
KADIKKULAM
AGASTYANPALLI
244
MUTTUPET
KODIKKARAI
245

Route Chart 14

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
249	Poovanur	51	Via Muttupet and Mannargudi	6332
250	Koilvenni	10	Via Nidamangalam	6342
251	Parudhiapparkoil	18	Via Ammapettai and Neyvasal.	6360
252	Avaliva Nallur	19	Via Ammapettai.	6379
253	Haridwara Mangalam	3	..	6382
254	Avur	12	..	6394
255	Nallur	4	On way to Papanasam	6398
256	Pattiswaram	4	..	6402
257	Tirusaktimuttam	1	..	6403
258	Palaiyur	4	Via Pattiswaram.	6407
259	Darasuram	5	Via Pattiswaram.	6412
260	Tiruvalamchuli	3	..	6415
261	Swamimalai	2	..	6417
262	Kottaiyur	4	On way to Kumbakonam	6421
263	Innambur	4	..	6425
264	Tirupurambiyam	3	..	6428
265	Tiruvijayamangai	4	..	6432
266	Tiruvaikavur	3	..	6435
267	Tiruppalaithurai	15	Via Papanasam.	6450
268	Tirukarugavur	8	Via Papanasam.	6458
269	Chakkarapalli	13	Via Papanasam and Ayyampettai.	6471
270	Pullamangai	1	..	6472

Route Map 14

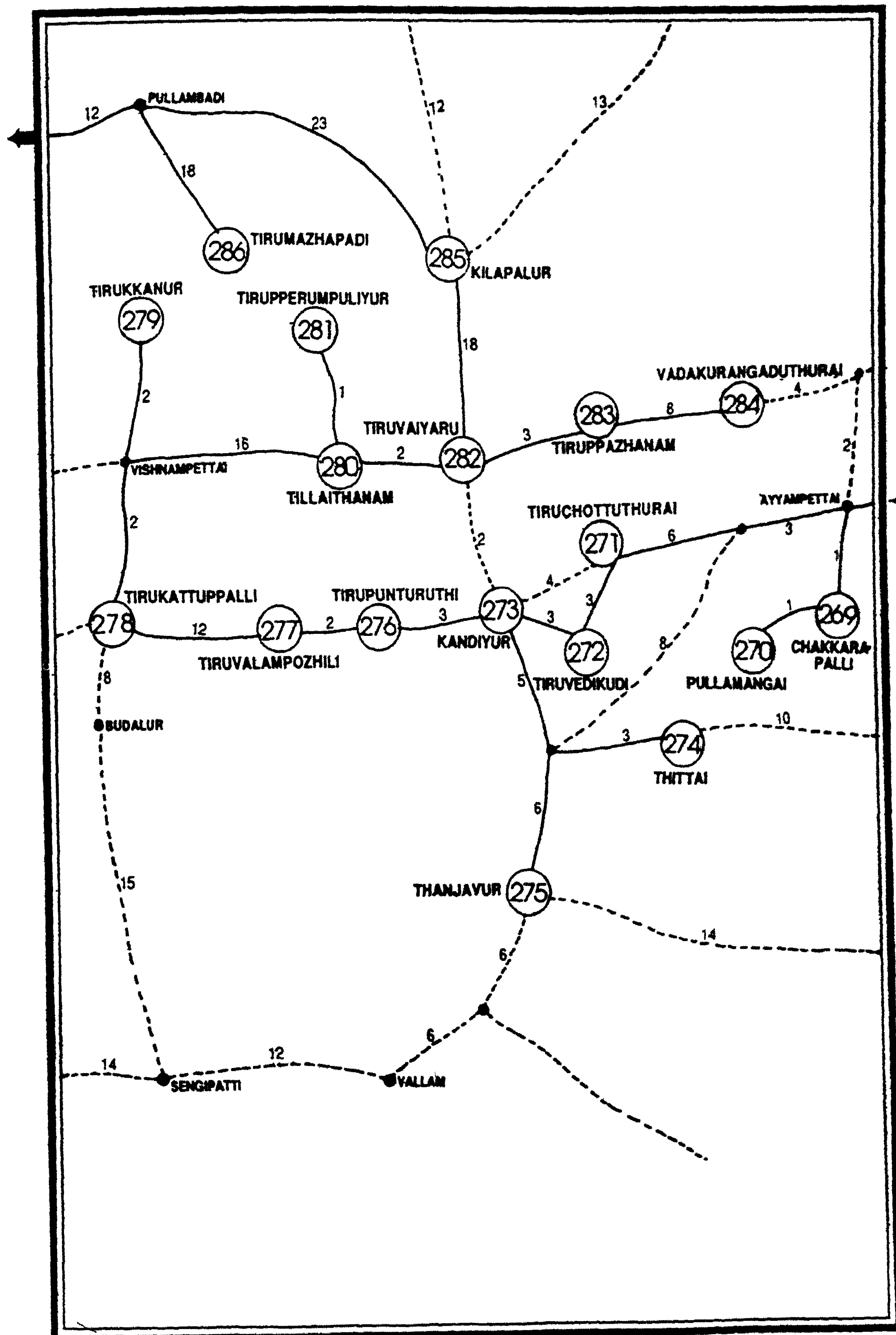


TIRUVIJAYAMANGAI
265
264
TIRUPURAMBIYAM
TIRUVAIKAVUR
266
INNAMBUR
263
SWAMIMALAI
261
262
KOTTAIYUR
DARASURAM
TIRUVALAM CHULI
260
259
TIRUPPALAITHURAI
267
PALAIYUR
258
PAPANASAM
AYYAMPETTAI
PATTISWARAM
256
CHAKKARAPALLI
269
270
PULLAMANGAI
NALLUR
255
257
TIRUSAKTIMUTTAM
AVUR
254
TIRUKARUGAVUR
268
253
HARIDWARA MANGALAM
AVALIVA NALLUR
252
AMMAPETTAI
250
KOILVENNI
SALIAMANGALAM
NIDAMANGALAM
NEYVASAL
251
PARUDHIAPPAR KOIL
POOVANUR
249

Route Chart 15

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
271	Tiruchottuthurai	11	On way to Kandiyur.	6483
272	Tiruvedikudi	3	..	6486
273	Kandiyur	3	..	6489
274	Thittai (Tirutenkudi)	8	..	6497
275	Thanjavur	9	..	6506
276	Tirupunturuthi	14	Via Kandiyur on way to Tirukattuppalli.	6520
277	Tiruvalampozhili	2	..	6522
278	Tirukattuppalli	12	..	6534
279	Tirukkanur	4	Via Vishnampettai.	6538
280	Tillaithanam	18	Via Vishnampettai on way to Tiruvaiyaru.	6556
281	Tirupperumpuliyur	1	..	6557
282	Tiruvaiyaru	3	Via Tillaithanam.	6560
283	Tiruppazhanam	3	On way to Kumbakonam.	6563
284	Vadakurangaduthurai	8	On way to Kumbakonam.	6571
285	Kilapalur	29	Via Tiruvaiyaru on way to Ariyalur.	6600
286	Tirumazhapadi	41	Via Pullambadi.	6641

Route Map 15

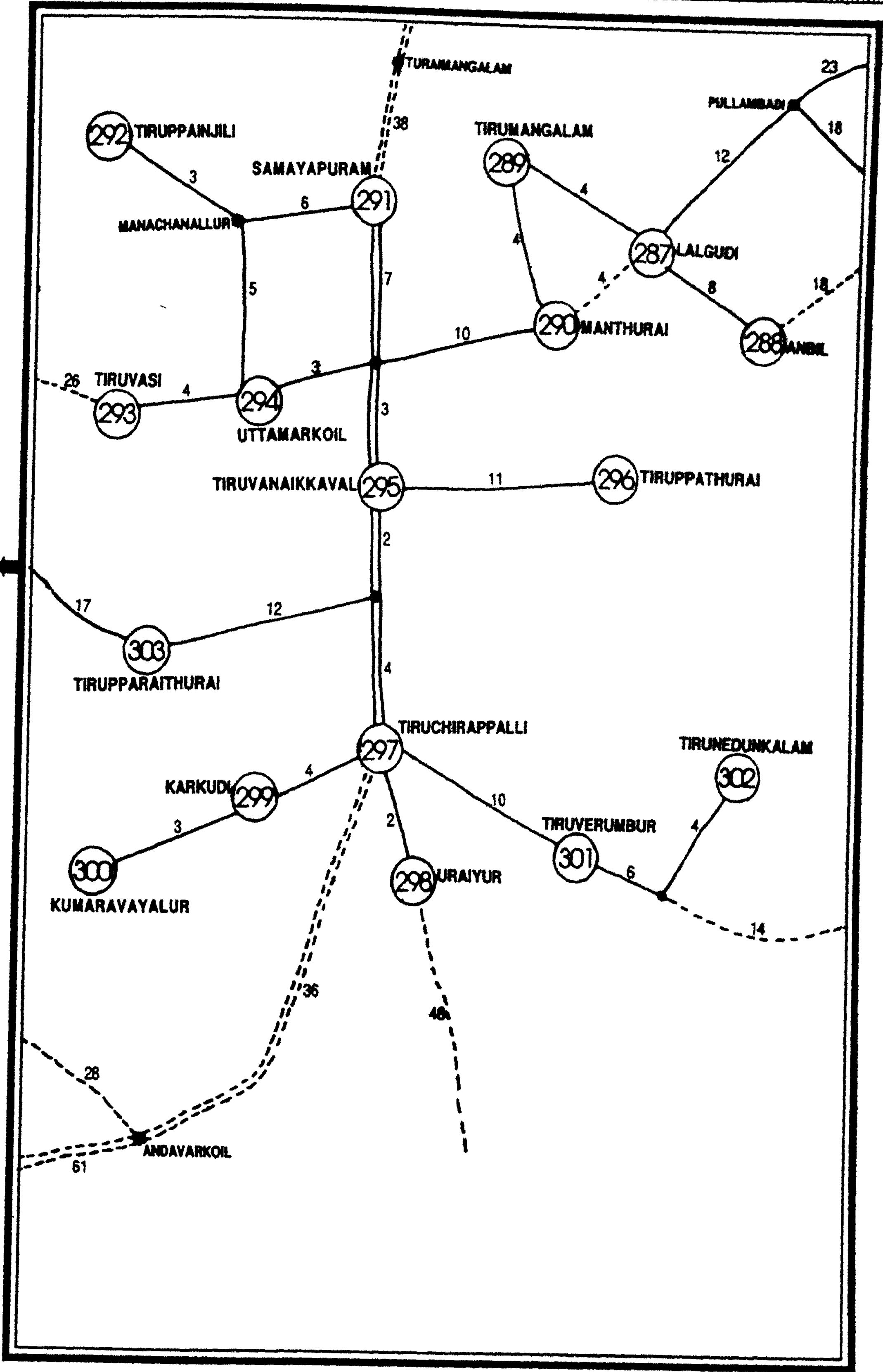


PULLAMBADI
TIRUMAZHAPADI
KILAPALUR
TIRUKKANUR
TIRUPPERUMPULIYUR
VADAKURANGADUTHURAI
TIRUVAIYARU
TIRUPPAZHANAM
VISHNAMPETTAI
TILLAITHANAM
TIRUCHOTTUTHURAI
AYYAMPETTAI
TIRUKATTUPPALLI
TIRUPUNTURUTHI
KANDIYUR
TIRUVALAMPOZHILI
TIRUVEDIKUDI
PULLAMANGAI
CHAKKARA-PALLI
BUDALUR
THITTAI
THANJAVUR
SENGIPATTI
VALLAM
286
285
279
281
282
280
283
284
271
273
278
277
276
272
270
269
274
275

Route Chart 16

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
287	Lalgudi	30	Via Pullambadi	6671
288	Anbil	8	..	6679
289	Tirumangalam	12	Via Lalgudi	6691
290	Manthurai	4	..	6695
291	Samayapuram	17	..	6712
292	Tiruppainjili	9	Via Manachanallur	6721
293	Tiruvasi	12	Via Manachanallur	6733
294	Uttamarkoil	4	On way to Tiruvanaikkaval.	6737
295	Tiruvanaikkaval	6	..	6743
296	Tiruppathurai	11	..	6754
297	Tiruchirappalli	17	Via Tiruvanaikkaval.	6771
298	Uraiyur	2	..	6773
299	Karkudi	6	On way to Kumaravayalur.	6779
300	Kumaravayalur	3	..	6782
301	Tiruverumbur	17	Via Tiruchirappalli.	6799
302	Tirunedunkalam	10	..	6809
303	Tirupparaithurai	36	Via Tiruchirappalli on way to Kulitalai.	6845

Route Map 16

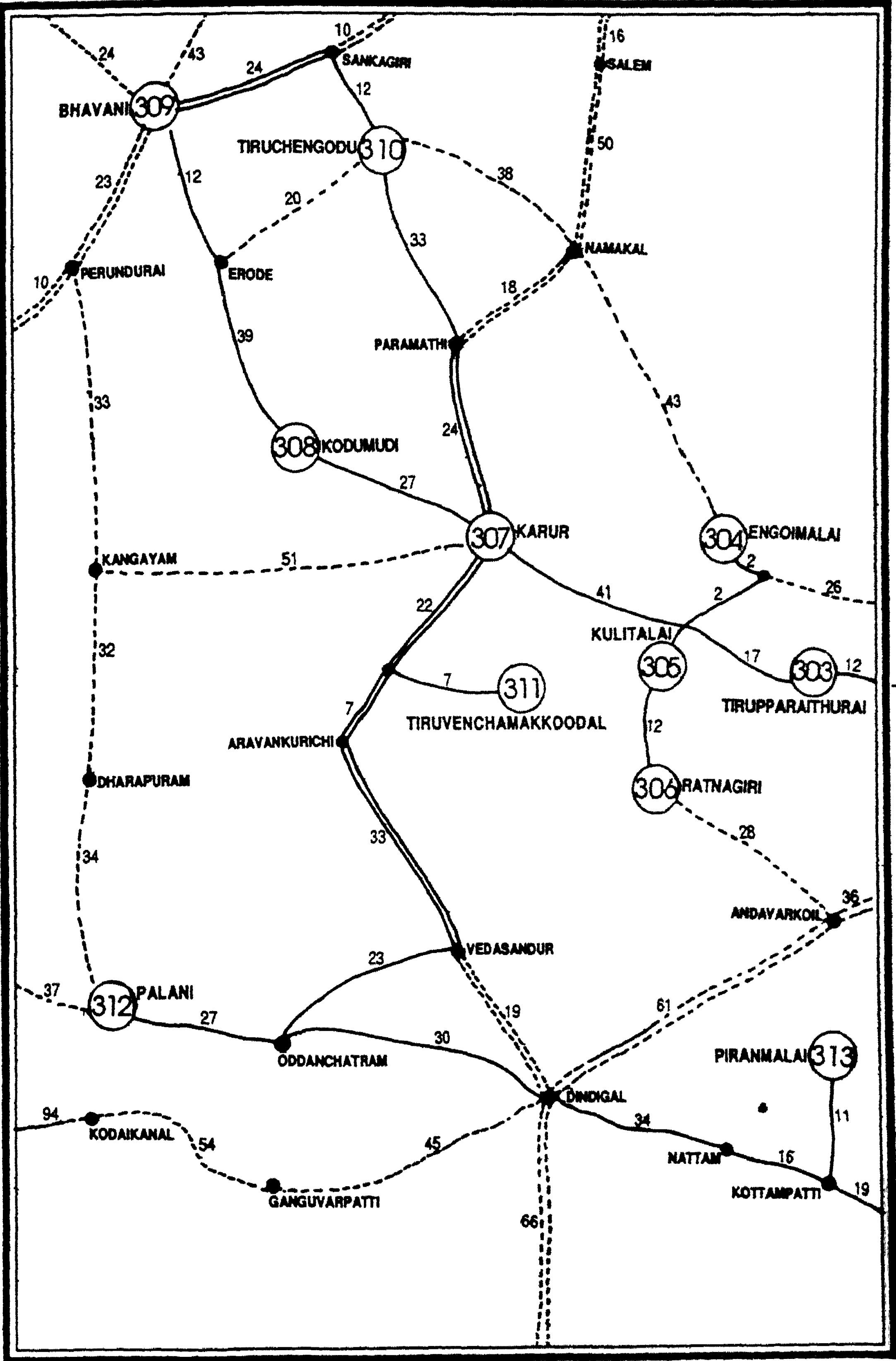


TURAMANGALAM
PULLAMBADI
23
18
12
38
292 TIRUPPAINJILI
TIRUMANGALAM
289
3
SAMAYAPURAM
291
6
MANACHANALLUR
4
287 LALGUDI
7
5
4
4
8
18
10
290 MANTHURAI
288 ANBIL
3
26
TIRUVASI
4
293
294
UTTAMARKOIL
3
TIRUVANAIKKAVAL
295
11
296 TIRUPPATHURAI
2
17
12
303
TIRUPPARAITHURAI
4
TIRUCHIRAPPALLI
297
TIRUNEDUNKALAM
302
KARKUDI
299
4
10
3
2
TIRUVERUMBUR
4
300
KUMARAVAYALUR
298 URAIYUR
301
6
14
36
48
28
ANDAVARKOIL
61

Route Chart 17

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
304	Engoimalai	21	Via Kulitalai.	6866
305	Kulitalai	4	..	6870
306	Ratnagiri	12	..	6882
307	Karur	53	Via Kulitalai.	6935
308	Kodumudi	27	..	6962
309	Bhavani	51	Via Erode.	7013
310	Tiruchengodu	36	..	7049
311	Tiruvencha-makkoodal	86	Via Karur on way to Vedasandur	7135
312	Palani	97	Via Vedasandur.	7232
313	Piranmalai	118	Via Dindigal, Nattam and Kottampatti.	7350

Route Map 17

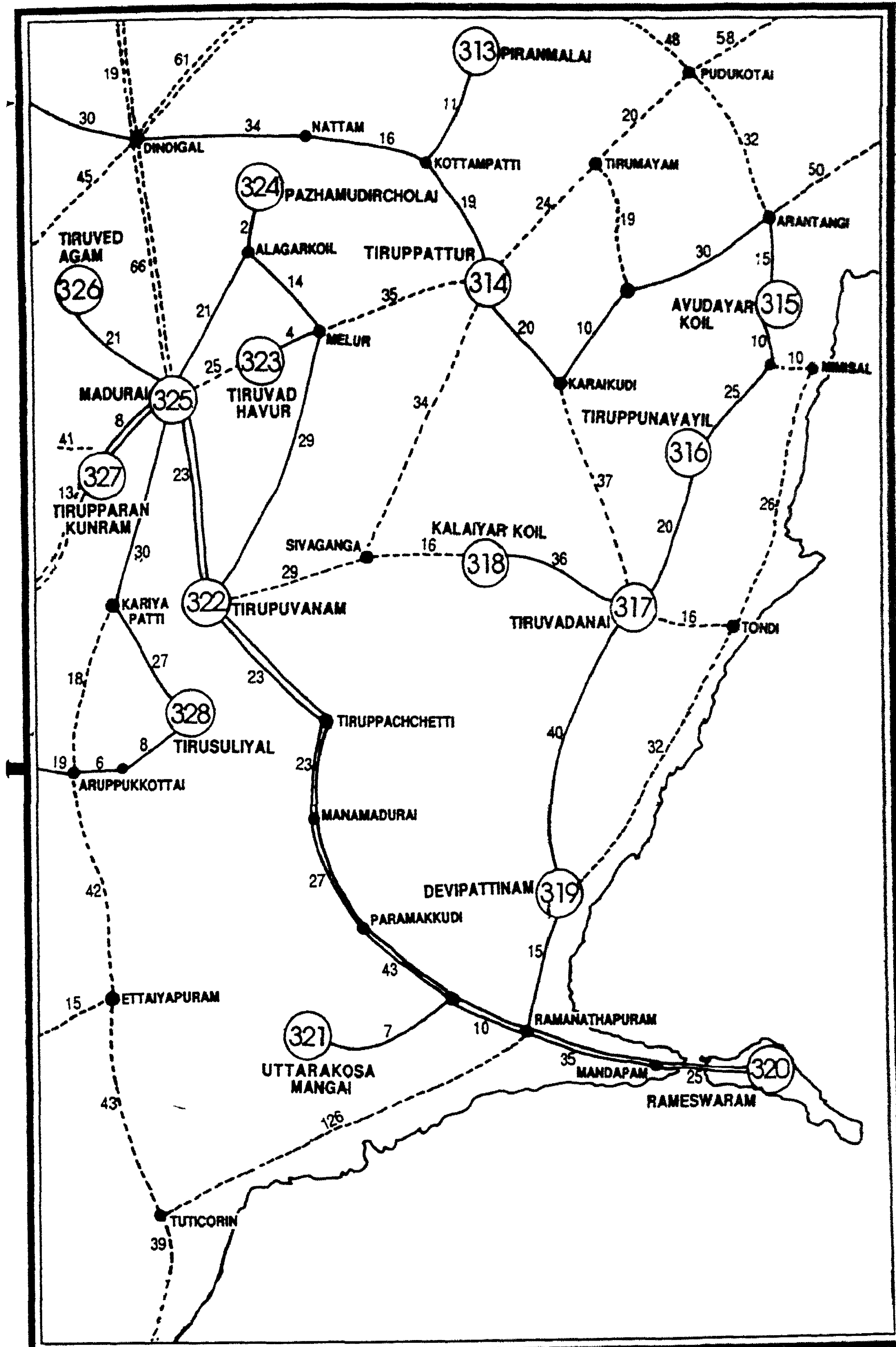


BHAVANI
309
SANKAGIRI
SALEM
TIRUCHENGODU
310
NAMAKAL
PERUNDURAI
ERODE
PARAMATHI
308
KODUMUDI
307
KARUR
304
ENGOIMALAI
KANGAYAM
KULITALAI
305
303
311
TIRUPPARAITHURAI
TIRUVENCHAMAKKOODAL
ARAVANKURICHI
DHARAPURAM
306
RATNAGIRI
ANDAVARKOIL
VEDASANDUR
312
PALANI
ODDANCHATRAM
PIRANMALAI
313
DINDIGAL
KODAIKANAL
NATTAM
KOTTAMPATTI
GANGUVARPATTI

Route Chart 18

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
314	Tiruppattur	30	..	7380
315	Avudayar Koil	75	Via Karaikudi and Arantangi.	7455
316	Tiruppunavayil	35	..	7490
317	Tiruvadanai	20	..	7510
318	Kalaiyar Koil	36	..	7546
319	Devipattinam	76	Via Tiruvadanai.	7622
320	Rameswaram	75	Via Ramanathapuram and Mandapam	7697
321	Uttara Kosa Mangai	77	Via Ramanathapuram	7774
322	Tirupuvanam	123	Via Paramakkudi and Manamadurai.	7897
323	Tiruvadhavur	33	Via Melur	7930
324	Pazhamudircholai	20	Via Melur and Alagar Koil	7950
325	Madurai	23	..	7973
326	Tiruvedagam	21	..	7994
327	Tirupparankunram	29	Via Madurai.	8023
328	Tirusuliyal	65	Via Madurai and Kariyapatti.	8088

Route Map 18

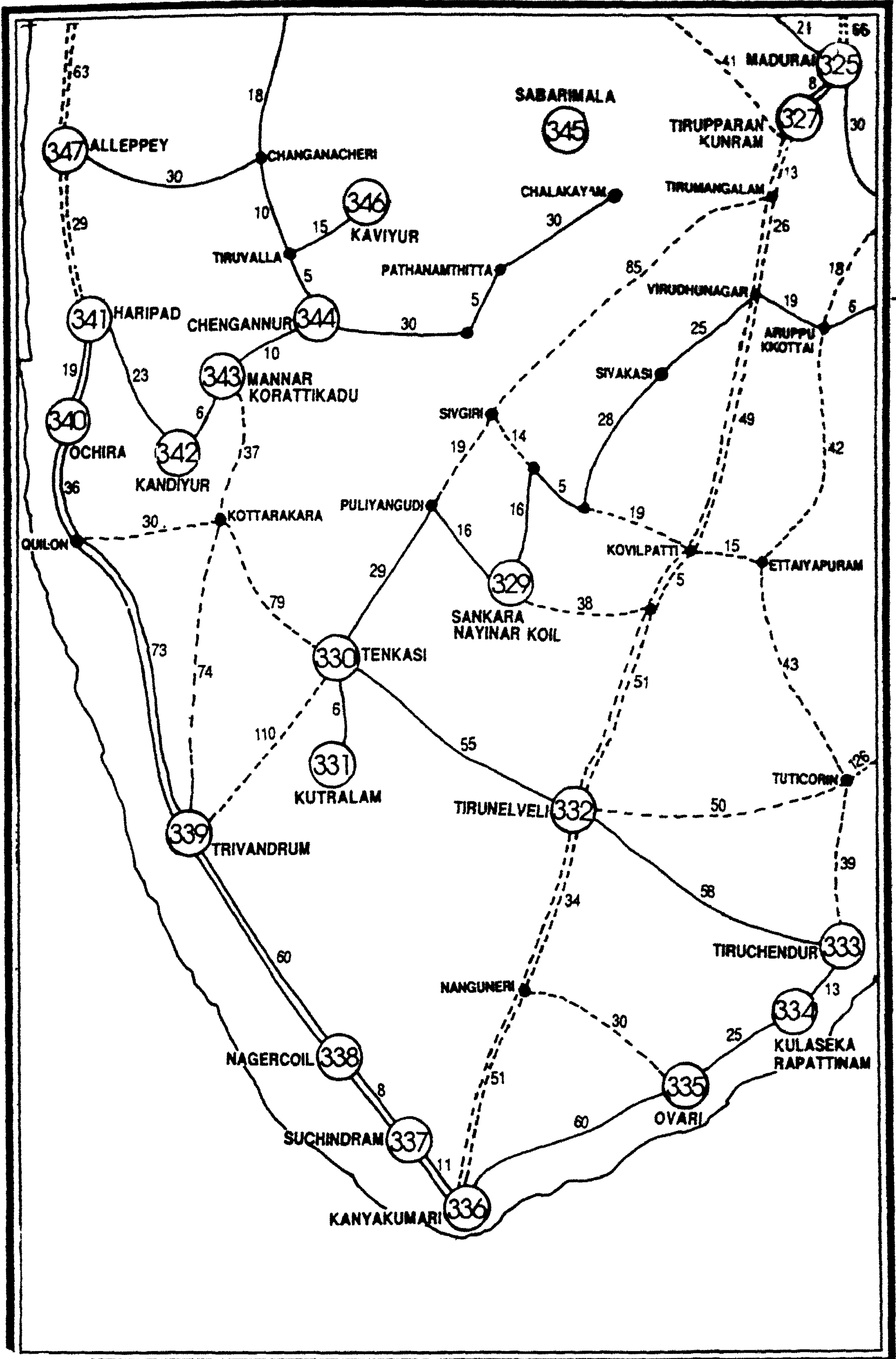


PIRANMALAI
PUDUKOTAI
DINDIGAL
NATTAM
KOTTAMPATTI
TIRUMAYAM
PAZHAMUDIRCHOLAI
ALAGARKOIL
TIRUPPATTUR
ARANTANGI
TIRUVED AGAM
AVUDAYAR KOIL
MELUR
KARAIKUDI
MADURAI
TIRUVAD HAVUR
TIRUPPUNAVAYIL
TIRUPPARAN KUNRAM
KALAIYAR KOIL
SIVAGANGA
TIRUPUVANAM
TIRUVADANAI
TONDI
KARIYA PATTI
TIRUPPACHCHETTI
TIRUSULIYAL
ARUPPUKKOTTAI
MANAMADURAI
DEVIPATTINAM
PARAMAKKUDI
ETTAIYAPURAM
RAMANATHAPURAM
UTTARAKOSA MANGAI
MANDAPAM
RAMESWARAM
TUTICORIN

Route Chart 19

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
329	Sankara Nayinar Koil	107	Via Aruppukkottai, Virudhunagar and Sivakasi.	8195
330	Tenkasi	45	Via Puliyangudi.	8240
331	Kutralam	6	..	8246
332	Tirunelveli	61	..	8307
333	Tiruchendur	58	..	8365
334	Kulasekarapattinam	13	..	8378
335	Ovari	25	On way to Kanyakumari	8403
336	Kanyakumari	60	..	8463
337	Suchindram	11	On way to Nagercoil	8474
338	Nagercoil	8	..	8482
339	Trivandrum	60	..	8542
340	Ochira	109	..	8651
341	Haripad	19	..	8670
342	Kandiyur	23	..	8693
343	Mannar Korattikadu	6	Towards Chengannur.	8699
344	Chengannur	10	..	8709
345	Sabarimala (upto chalakayam)	65	Via Pathanamthitta	8774
346	Kaviyur	85	Via Tiruvalla.	8859
347	Alleppey	55	Via Tiruvalla and Changanacheri.	8914

Route Map 19

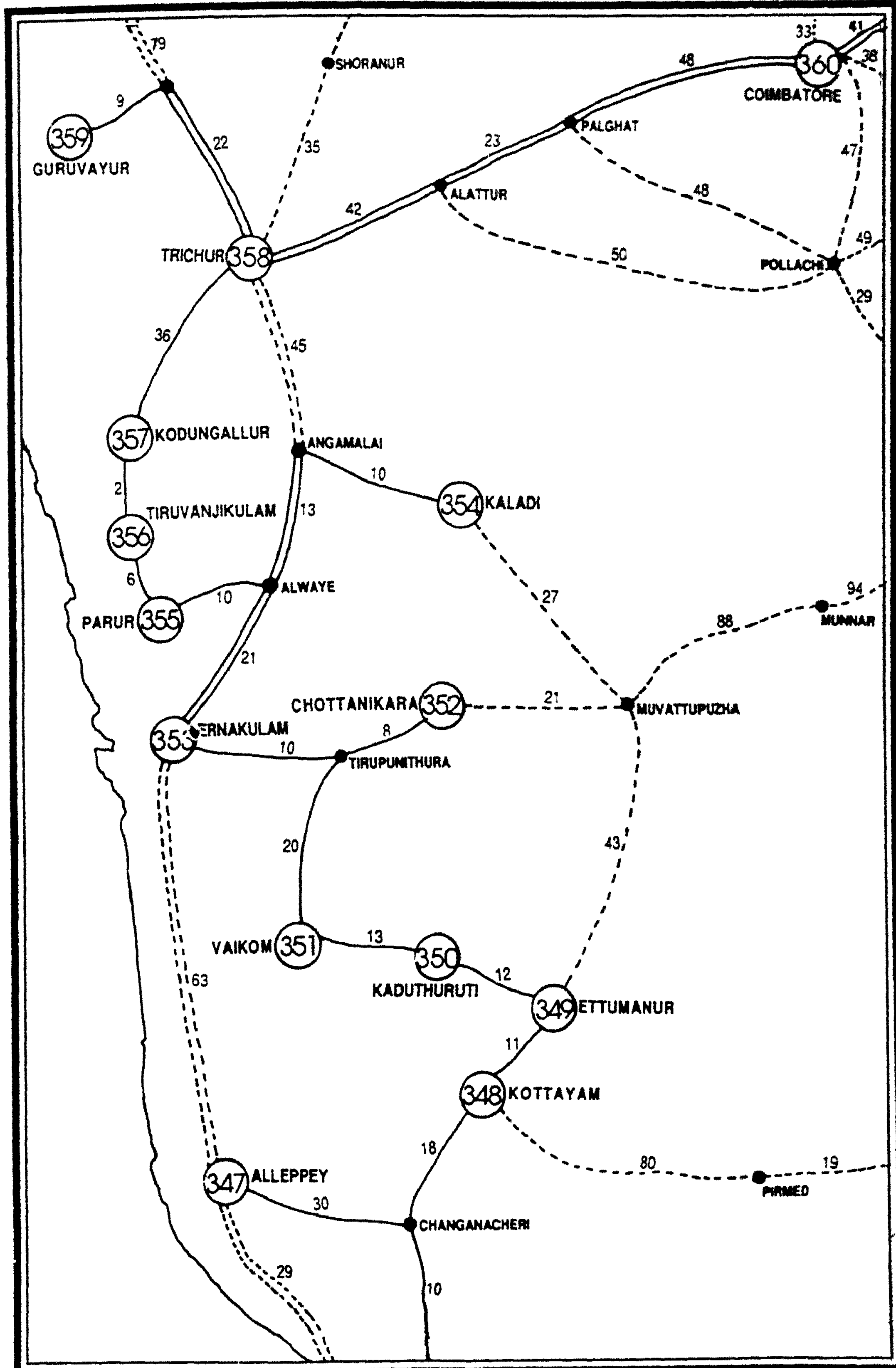


MADURAI 325
TIRUPPARAN KUNRAM 327
SABARIMALA 345
ALLEPPEY 347
CHANGANACHERI
KAVIYUR 346
TIRUVALLA
CHALAKAYAM
TIRUMANGALAM
PATHANAMTHITTA
VIRUDHUNAGAR
HARIPAD 341
CHENGANNUR 344
ARUPPU KKOTTAI
MANNAR KORATTIKADU 343
SIVAKASI
OCHIRA 340
SIVGIRI
KANDIYUR 342
KOTTARAKARA
PULIYANGUDI
QUILON
KOVILPATTI
ETTAIYAPURAM
SANKARA NAYINAR KOIL 329
TENKASI 330
KUTRALAM 331
TUTICORIN
TIRUNELVELI 332
TRIVANDRUM 339
TIRUCHENDUR 333
NANGUNERI
KULASEKA RAPATTINAM 334
NAGERCOIL 338
OVARI 335
SUCHINDRAM 337
KANYAKUMARI 336

Route Chart 20

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
348	Kottayam	48	..	8962
349	Ettumanur	11	..	8973
350	Kaduthuruti	12	On way to Vaikom.	8985
351	Vaikom	13	..	8998
352	Chottanikara	28	Via Tirupunithura.	9026
353	Ernakulam	18	..	9044
354	Kaladi	44	Via Alwaye and Angamalai.	9088
355	Parur	33	Via Angamalai.	9121
356	Tiruvanjikulam	6	On way to Kodungallur.	9127
357	Kodungallur	2	..	9129
358	Trichur	36	..	9165
359	Guruvayur	31	..	9196
360	Coimbatore	144	..	9340

Route Map 20

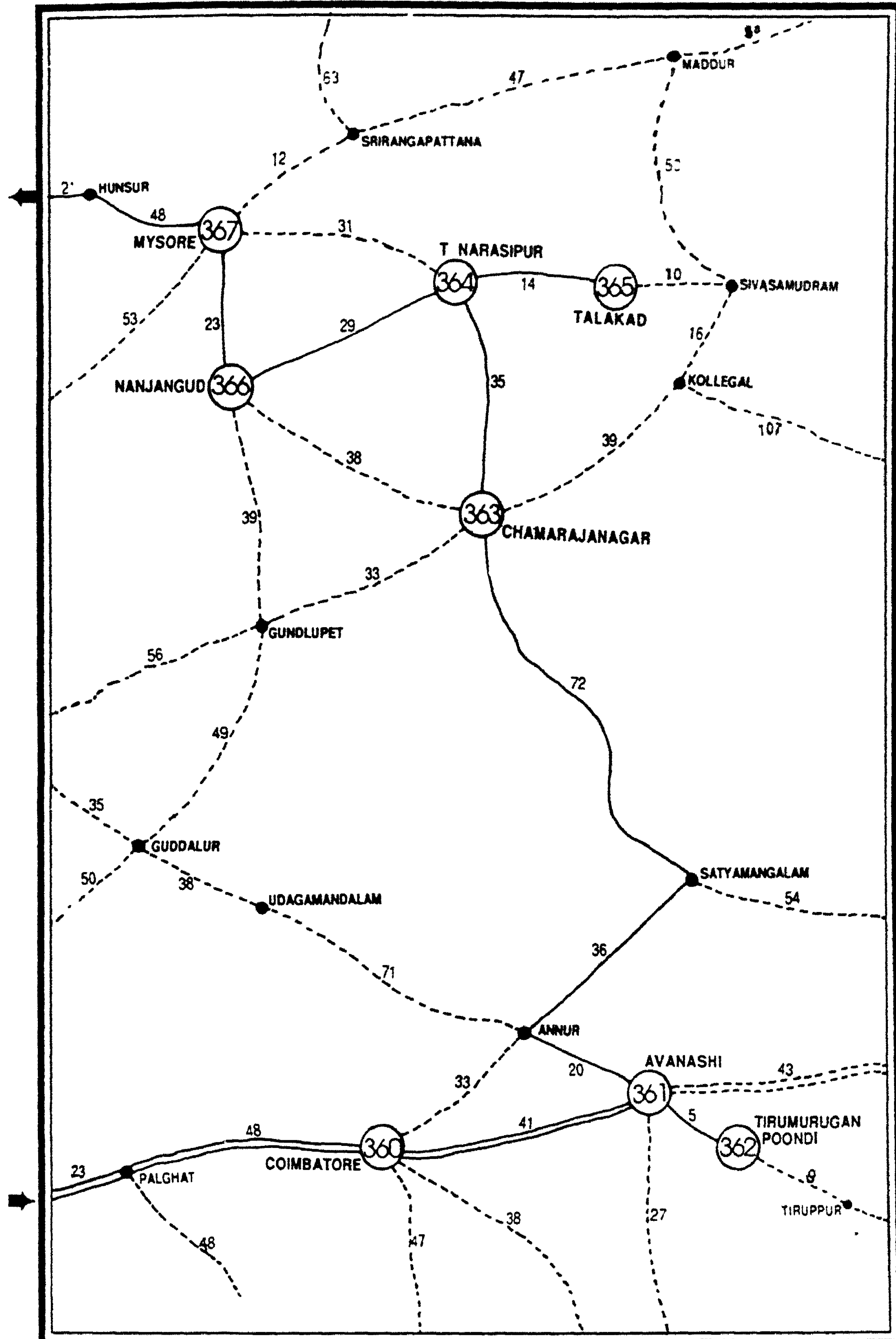


245

Route Chart 21

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
361	Avanashi	41	..	9381
362	Tirumurugan-poondi	5	On way to Tiruppur.	9386
363	Chamarajanagar	133	Via Avanashi, Annur and Satyamangalam.	9519
364	T. Narasipur	35	..	9554
365	Talakad	14	..	9568
366	Nanjangud	43	Via T. Narasipur.	9611
367	Mysore	23	..	9634

Route Map 21

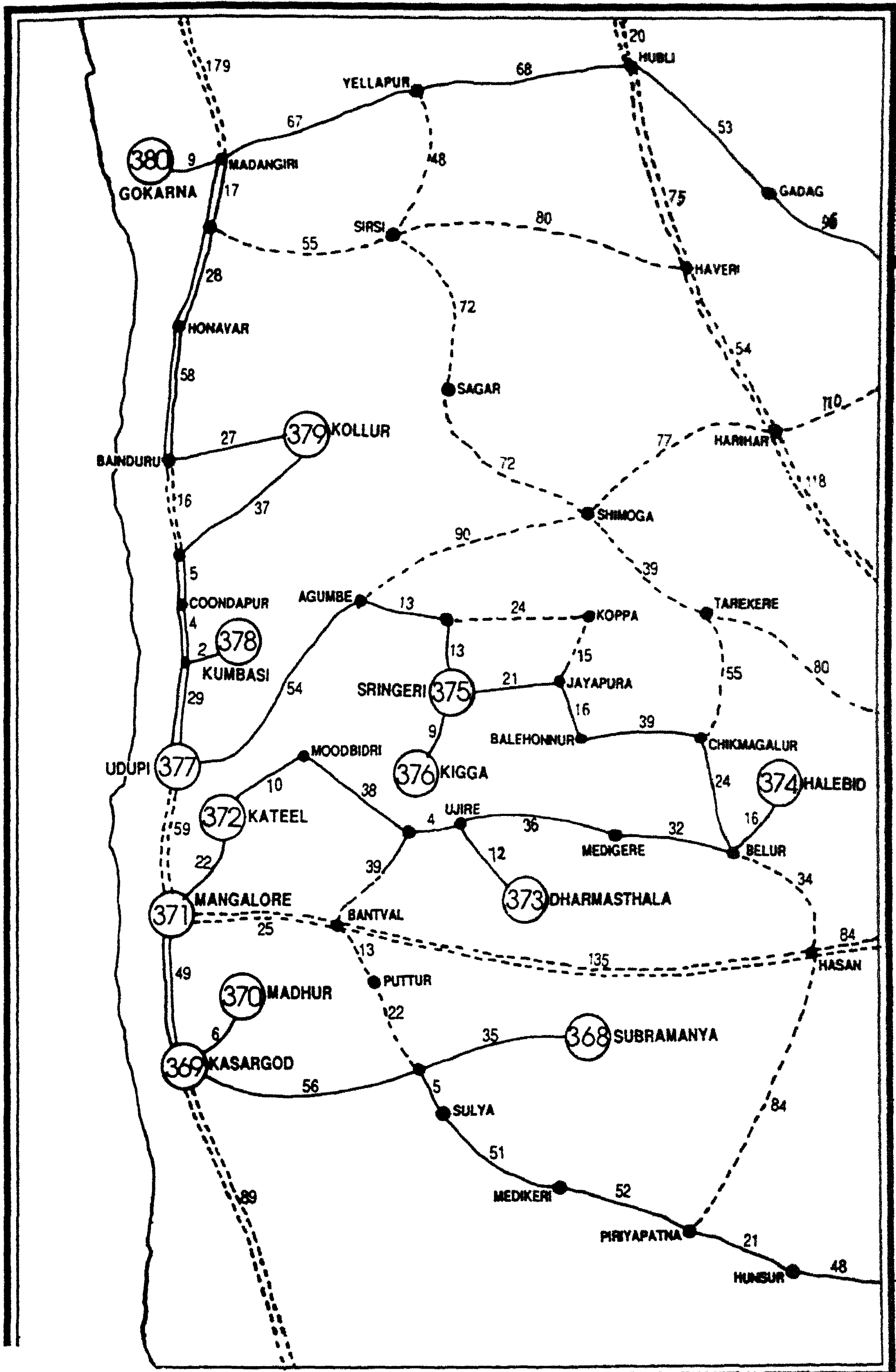


MADDUR
SRIRANGAPATTANA
HUNSUR
MYSORE
367
T NARASIPUR
364
365
TALAKAD
SIVASAMUDRAM
KOLLEGAL
NANJANGUD
366
363
CHAMARAJANAGAR
GUNDLUPET
GUDDALUR
UDAGAMANDALAM
SATYAMANGALAM
ANNUR
AVANASHI
361
TIRUMURUGAN POONDI
362
TIRUPPUR
PALGHAT
COIMBATORE
360

Route Chart 22

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
368	Subramanya	212	Via Hunsur, Medikeri and Sulya.	9846
369	Kasargod	91	..	9937
370	Madhur	6	..	9943
371	Mangalore	55	Via Kasargod.	9998
372	Kateel	22	..	10020
373	Dharmasthala	64	Via Moodbidri and Ujire.	10084
374	Halebid	96	..	10180
375	Sringeri	116	Via Chikmagalur and Balehonnur	10296
376	Kigga	9	..	10305
377	Udupi	89	Via Agumbe.	10394
378	Kumbasi	31	On way to Coondapur	10425
379	Kollur	48	Via Coondapur.	10473
380	Gokarna	139	Via Bainduru, Honavar and Madangiri	10612

Route Map 22



HUBLI
20
YELLAPUR
68
179
67
53
GADAG
96
380
9
MADANGIRI
GOKARNA
17
48
SIRSI
80
55
75
HAVERI
28
HONAVAR
72
58
54
SAGAR
110
379
KOLLUR
27
BAINDURU
77
HARIHAR
72
118
16
37
SHIMOGA
90
5
39
COONDAPUR
AGUMBE
13
24
KOPPA
TAREKERE
4
378
2
KUMBASI
13
15
55
80
29
54
SRINGERI
375
21
JAYAPURA
16
39
BALEHONNUR
CHIKMAGALUR
9
MOODBIDRI
UDUPI
377
376
KIGGA
24
374
HALEBID
10
38
372
KATEEL
UJIRE
4
36
32
16
59
MEDIGERE
BELUR
22
12
39
34
MANGALORE
371
373
DHARMASTHALA
BANTVAL
25
84
13
135
HASAN
49
PUTTUR
370
MADHUR
22
35
368
SUBRAMANYA
6
369
KASARGOD
56
5
SULYA
84
51
89
MEDIKERI
52
PIRIYAPATNA
21
48
HUNSUR

Route Chart 23

Sl. No.	Name of the Place	Distance from Previous Place	Route	Total Distance Covered (in Km)
381	Hampi	307	Via Yellapur, Hubli and Hospet.	10919
382	Lepakshi	300	Via Bellary, Uravakonda, Anantapur and Penukonda.	11219
383	Ghati-Subramanya	66	Via Hindupur and Gouribidanur	11285
384	Nandi Hills	30	..	11315
385	Bangalore	60	..	11375

